



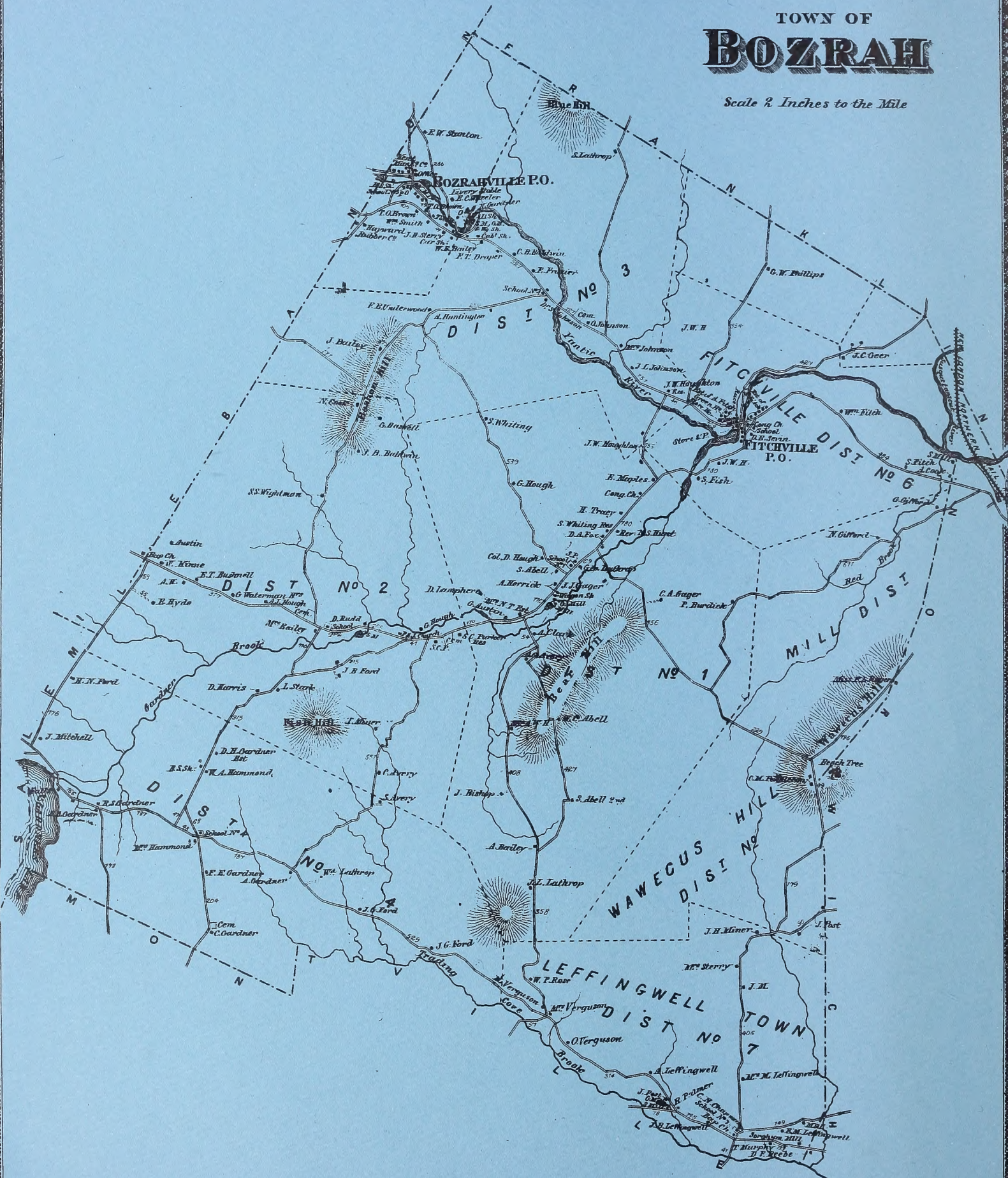
200th Anniversary

Town of Bozrah

Connecticut's 86th Town

TOWN OF BOZRAH

Scale 2 Inches to the Mile



INTRODUCTION

The Bozrah BiCentennial Commission has produced this booklet to acquaint the reader with a brief history of the town and its members.

The history of the town was taken from old histories, plus contributions from organizations, businesses and families from Bozrah.

The commission regrets having to cut some of the materials given to us because of volume. But everything submitted will be kept at the Town Hall and a copy of everything will be put in the Time Capsule.

Publishing of this booklet would not have been possible without the contributions of materials by many individuals. This Commission has not researched the historical material given to us, we are depending upon the accuracy of the contributors.

A special thanks to Fred R. Gerber.

LOCATED
IN FRONT
OF
TOWN HALL

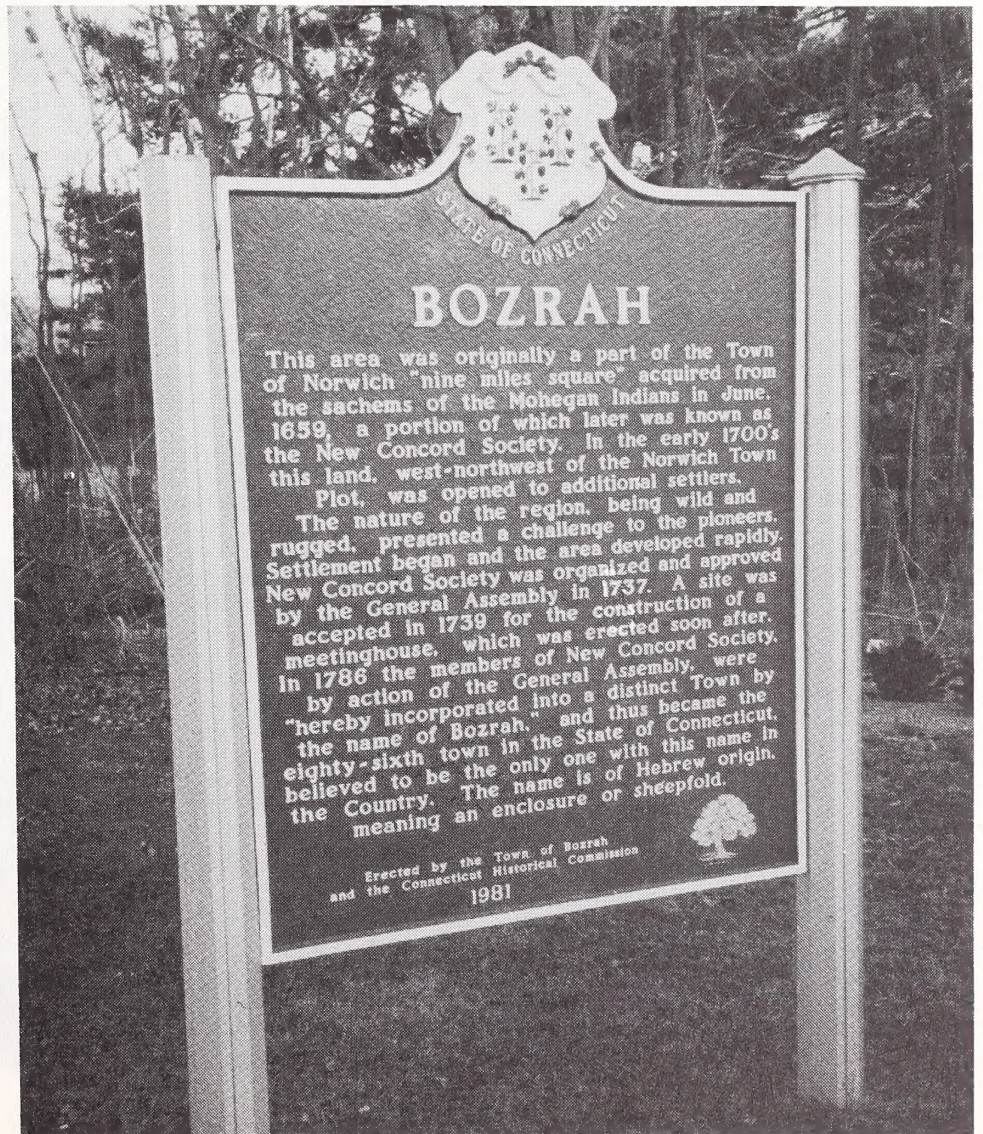
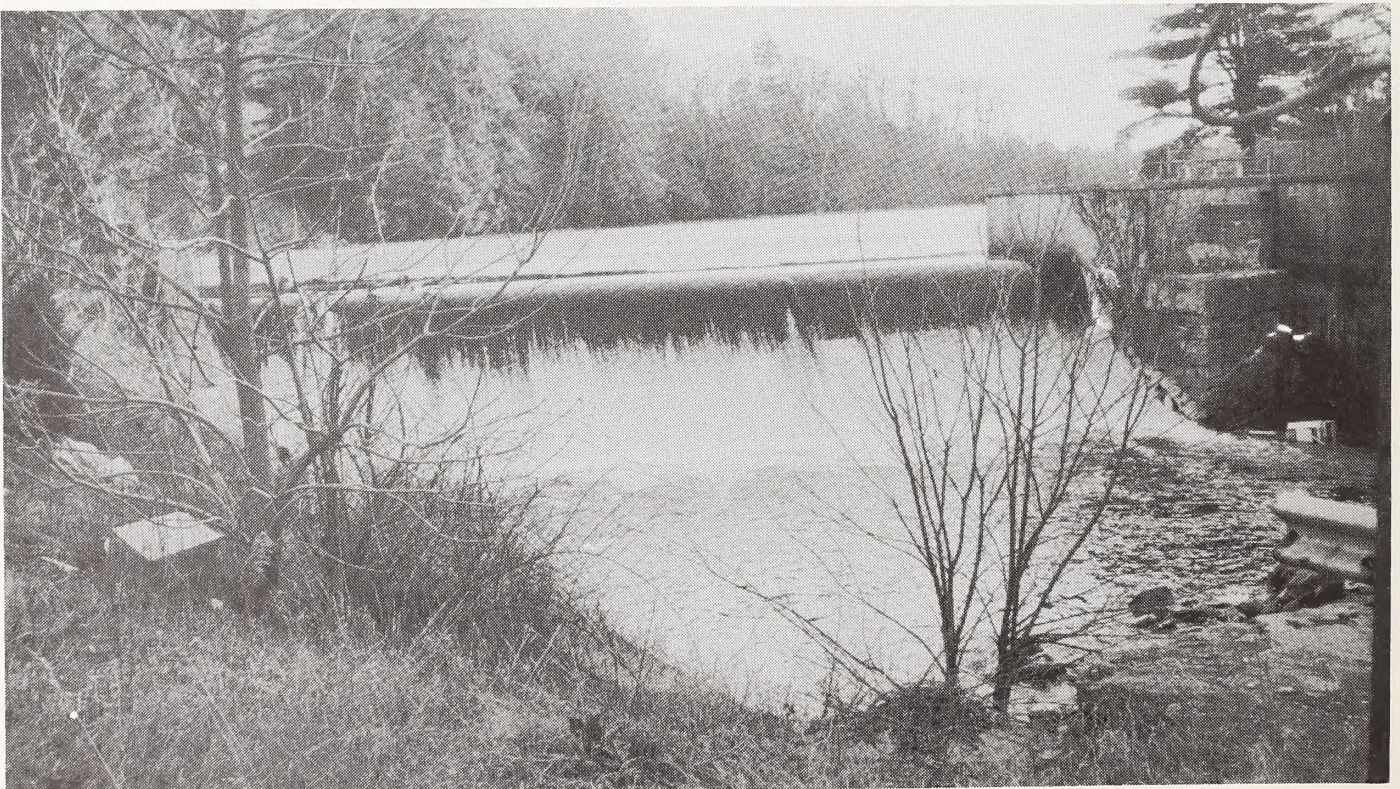


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FITCHVILLE DAM

OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN
TOWN OF BOZRAH
TOWN HALL
BOZRAH, CONN. 06334

PROCLAMATION

TOWN OF BOZRAH

BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

MAY 1, 1986 - JUNE 30TH, 1986

WHEREAS, the Town of Bozrah, incorporated in May, 1786 as the 86th Town in the State of Connecticut, this year will celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the Town and,

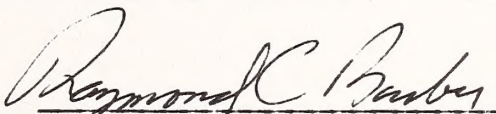
WHEREAS, the period of May 1, 1986 thru June 30th, 1986, has been designated by the Bozrah BiCentennial Commission for a series of celebrations and related events and,

WHEREAS, many Bozrah residents, churches and other organizations have worked long and hard to plan and carry out these events for the information and enjoyment of all residents and,

WHEREAS, the history of the Town of Bozrah has revealed many important events which have moulded the heritage of our Town now,

THEREFORE, I Raymond C. Barber, First Selectman, Town of Bozrah, do hereby proclaim the period from May 1, 1986 thru June 30th, 1986 as a BiCentennial Celebration period in the Town of Bozrah. During this period I ask all groups and citizens to fully partake of the events planned so that we may become more aware of our history and heritage and renew our faith and pride in the Town of Bozrah.

In Witness Whereof, I have set my hand as First Selectman of the Town of Bozrah on this 1st day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and eighty-six.


Raymond C. Barber
First Selectman
Town of Bozrah



WILLIAM A. O'NEILL
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT




May, 1986

This year, as the citizens of Bozrah celebrate the 200th anniversary of this community, it is an appropriate time to recall your proud heritage of progress and accomplishment and look to the future with confidence and optimism.

Founded essentially as an agricultural community, Bozrah and its earliest residents gave meaningful values and direction to our emerging democracy. After 200 years, the community has grown considerably, has recorded much progress, and has experienced many changes. However, the character of the people and the values established by those early settlers have not changed. Today, the people of Bozrah can take great and well-deserved pride in the many contributions which this town and its residents have made to the social, cultural, political, economic and community life of our state.

As Governor of the State of Connecticut, it is an honor for me to extend best wishes and congratulations to the residents of Bozrah on behalf of all the citizens of our state. May the commemoration of this milestone in your history be a most memorable and meaningful occasion for all, and may it mark the beginning of many more centuries of progress and achievement for Bozrah residents.


WILLIAM A. O'NEILL
Governor

CHRISTOPHER J. DODD
CONNECTICUT

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

January 27, 1986

The Honorable Raymond C. Barber
First Selectman
Town of Bozrah
Town Hall
Bozrah, CT 06334

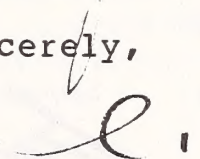
Dear Ray:

I am pleased to extend my warmest greetings to you and all the people of Bozrah on your great town's 200th birthday. I congratulate you on this truly historic occasion.

As a Senator and as a former Congressman from the 2nd District, I can attest to Connecticut's pride in Bozrah. May your laudable traditions not only continue, but strengthen and progress during the next 200 years!

With best wishes for an enjoyable and jubilant celebration,

Sincerely,



CHRISTOPHER J. DODD
United States Senate



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20515

SAM GEJDENSON
CONNECTICUT
SECOND DISTRICT

February, 28, 1986

Dear Friends,

As your Congressman, and as your neighbor, it gives me great pleasure to extend congratulations and greetings to my friends in Bozrah on our town's 200th birthday.

Although my family's roots in Bozrah don't date back to 1786, it is the only town I've called home. Growing up on our Bashon Hill farm taught me a lot of lessons that have helped me in later life: the value of hard work; the need for being honest, even when you disagree with someone; and, perhaps most useful, the importance of being a good neighbor.

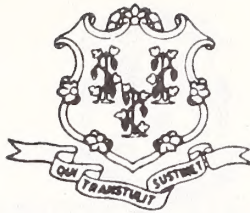
It was only through the help of our many good neighbors that my family was able to make our dairy farm, and our life in a new country, a success. Whether I am voting on foreign policy or working on a local problem with a constituent, I always try to remember those good neighbors. Any community becomes much stronger when its citizens work together.

These values have helped the people of Bozrah prosper for the past 200 years. They are the values that make me proud to call Bozrah home.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Sam Gejdenson", written over a horizontal line.

SAM GEJDENSON
Member of Congress



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
SENATE

STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD 06106

SENATOR ERIC R. BENSON
NINETEENTH DISTRICT

February 14, 1986

R.R. #2 BOX 78

NORTH FRANKLIN, CONNECTICUT 06254

A MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF BOZRAH:

As your State Senator, I am pleased and honored to congratulate you on the 200th anniversary of the establishment of your town.

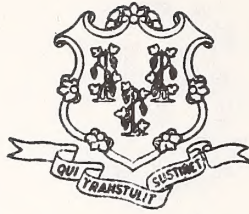
To me, Bozrah today exemplifies the traditional values and charm that once characterized all of New England. This beautiful town has always been among the first to contribute significantly to our nation's efforts to win and to preserve our precious freedoms. Nor should we forget that numerous Bozrah citizens have enjoyed an important role in the economic, political, and social development of our region and our state. These concerned men and women have made their mark through a strong sense of civic spirit that still thrives here today.

I proudly join you in this worthy salute to a fine town. It is important in this year's celebration to remember those people and events that helped shape the present and to rededicate ourselves to a sound future for all. I am privileged to serve you in any way possible in this effort.

With sincere best wishes,

Eric R. Benson
State Senator

ERB/jwm



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONN. 06106

REPRESENTATIVE EDITH PRAGUE
EIGHTH DISTRICT

ROUTE 87
COLUMBIA, CONNECTICUT 06237

MEMBER
HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

January 27, 1986

To the People of the Town of Bozrah:

It is my sincere pleasure to congratulate the Town of Bozrah on the occasion of its Two Hundredth Anniversary.

Bozrah is a lovely town nestled in a beautiful setting.

The warmth and the friendliness of the people have always drawn me to the town. I enjoy representing Bozrah at the State Capitol.

My best wishes to all on this momentous occasion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Edith Prague".

Edith Prague
State Representative

EP:rh

BOZRAH BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION

CHAIRMAN - EDWARD C. ODDIE

SECRETARY - CATHERINE L. SMITH

TREASURER - CAROL A. BARBER

OTHER MEMBERS:

DOROTHY B. BANNING

BEATRICE E. NYE

JOHN E. ORR

CYNTHIA M. PIANKA

GLENN S. PIANKA

JANE K. SEDER

EX OFFICIO MEMBER - FIRST SELECTMAN

RAYMOND C. BARBER

HONORARY ADVISOR

FRED R. GERBER

CURRENT PHOTOGRAPHS: EVELYN BROWN SEAL DESIGN: TIMOTHY LENEHAN

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED MAKE THIS CELEBRATION POSSIBLE.

BOZRAH HISTORY UP TO 1786

Do you ever think when you look about you and see the houses, roads, bridges, telephone lines, well tilled fields and other marks of civilization, that once none of these every-day signs of cultivated living existed here?

Who do you suppose first lived in Bozrah? You are quite right in answering, "The Indians lived here before the white men came." We are glad to be able to tell you that these Indians who were of the Mohican tribe were not forced by the white people to leave this land, nor did they wage war upon them in later years.

You have learned that these Indians never forgave an injury, so likewise they never forgot a kindness and were eager to show their appreciation to their Saybrook friends by selling them for seventy pounds in 1660, a tract of land nine miles square which was called Norwich and which included the present Town of Bozrah.

The first families to live in the part of Norwich now called Bozrah were the Waterman, Hough, Fox, Gager, Baldwin, and Croker families.

Bozrah Street (Route 163) was formerly a part of the old road by way of Scott Hill between Norwich and Colchester.

By 1780 a goodly number of people were living in the part of Norwich now called Bozrah, and at that time referred to as the New Concord Parish, and the people desired to be separated from Norwich and become an independent town. They could then have their own town meetings and manage their schools and other affairs to please themselves and no doubt these people had decided that their tax bills would be less each year if separated from the center of population where the cost of schools, roads, and bridges was much more than in their own little community. Accordingly, a committee consisting of Benjamin Throop, Asa Woodworth, Jr. and Zerubabel Wightman was appointed to present the matter to the voters of the Town of Norwich for consideration. After much discussion and deliberation, a favorable answer was given the petitioners and in 1786 New Concord was incorporated a separate town under the name of Bozrah.

The name may have been suggested by Mr. Throop on account of the original meaning of the word, which signifies sheepfold. Town tradition however, gives this explanation of how the town derived its name. In old times, it was considered an honor to be appointed a juryman and those who acted in that capacity arrayed themselves in Parliamentary colors. One day, as the Judge in the Norwich court sat waiting with others for a tardy juryman from New Concord, they saw him approach on horseback. As he drew near the Judge quoted this passage from the Bible, "Who is this that cometh from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah?" (Isaiah LXIII-I). From that time this man was referred to as the man

from Bozrah and gradually New Concord came to be called Bozrah. We think it is safe to say there is not another town of the same name in the country.

No doubt that Bozrah people felt very proud on the day of their first town meeting, which was held on June 20, 1786, in the town meeting house then standing a quarter mile southwest of the present Center Church. Mjr. Benjamin Throop was moderator and the following officers were elected; Selectmen, Mjr. Benjamin Throop, Nehemiah Waterman, Jr., and Asa Woodworth, Town Clerk, Ebenezer Backus, Treasurer, Capt. Isaac Huntington.

The early town meetings were held in the meeting house of the New Concord Society and when the new meeting house was erected, the town paid the Society four hundred dollars for the privilege of using the basement as a Town Hall. As Bozrah was set apart from Norwich, it has a right to send but one representative to the General Assembly. The first representative elected from Bozrah was Captain Isaac Huntington.

FITCHVILLE

In the northeastern part of Bozrah, picturesquely located in a valley among wooded hills lies the thriving, well-kept village of Fitchville. Here, where the Gardner and Pease rivers unite, to furnish the necessary water power for industries, an iron works was established in 1750 by Nehemiah Huntington and Captain Joshua Abel. It is said that cannon balls manufactured here were used in the Revolution. Those first used were tested on a hill southeast of the factory - the hill now known as Cannon Hill. The mill was afterward owned and operated by Colonel Asa Fitch, a lineal descendant of the Reverend James Fitch, who was born in Bozrah 1755, where he led an active business life as a farmer and iron manufacturer until his death in 1844.

Of his nine children, Asa, the fourth born, was destined to lead an unusually eventful and successful life. Born in 1787, in the house still standing, opposite the mill and "Mansion" grounds, his slender frame and pallid countenance gave little promise that he would live to manhood. Moreover, he was often prostrated by attacks of asthma, a disease from which he suffered while he lived. He became a student in the Lebanon Academy, a clerk in a Norwich store, and a mechanical apprentice, but was obliged to abandon each on account of ill health. At the age of eighteen, thinking his constitution might be benefited by a sea voyage, he embarked as a passenger on a brig going to New Lisbon in 1805 and finding the climate of southern Europe beneficial, he went to Alicant and secured a position in the American Consul's office. He remained at Alicant for nine years and engaged in mercantile affair, returning to America only once during that

time to establish commercial relations, and came gradually to be known as a merchant of financial standing.

In 1814 he moved to Marsailles, where he established a commission and banking house through which business between France and the United States was transacted. The best society in France welcomed Mr. Fitch within its circle and he frequently was entertained by and in turn entertained noble statesmen and literary men of the highest standing. The house continued to flourish and was agent for the United States Navy, furnishing supplies and making payments to government vessels in the Mediterranean. It purchased French goods for American buyers and had agents in the United States to receive consignments from French merchants and manufacturers. Leaving his affairs in France in the hands of his brother Douglas and a nephew in 1828, Asa returned to America to take charge of his business affairs on his side of the Atlantic. He then made real estate purchases in New York City and owned lots on Broadway and Exchange streets. On these lots he erected a hotel and stores - the rents from which in later years made his income princely.

About 1840 he withdrew from active business life in New York City and made Fitchville his permanent home. His energetic mind transformed his home place into a region of beauty and fertility, and he proceeded to put into operation plans many of which he did not live to execute. He purchased farms adjoining the present village of Fitchville, and owned the land for miles west and south. His land on the east and north extended nearly to Norwich and Franklin boundaries. On this land, perhaps one hundred workmen were employed draining, uprooting, and removing rocks, turning his rocky domain into fertile fields. These employees received fifty cents per day and traded at the Fitch store where it is said not one was refused necessities however great his indebtedness. On his acres of pasture land Mr. Fitch kept a fine herd of cows and supplied the village with milk. In the winter season, when the quantity of milk was small, orders were given that in homes where little children lived milk should be delivered sufficient for their needs. If any were to go unprovided, it must be the grown-ups. So you see, Mr. Fitch was the friend of the little people.

Mr. Fitch built a stone dam near the iron mill and forced the Pease and Gardner Brooks to furnish water power to turn the wheels of the new factory for he had also erected a cotton mill. With his brothers Stephen and William he operated this mill until his death in 1865. Mr. Fitch also erected a stone dwelling known as the "mansion", a store, schoolhouse, an amusements hall, a grist mill, dwelling houses, and green houses, all of stone. He also built the village church. Through the village we find remains of grottoes and fountains and on the summit of Cannon Hill the ruins of a kind of outdoor aquarium. The most

remarkable building erected by Mr. Fitch was a stone structure known as the "Castle". This was not complete at the time of his death, and was afterwards torn down, the stone used in its building being placed in the stone mill. About a mile from the village at the railroad crossing northeast of Fitchville, he had erected a young ladies' seminary, the stone of which was afterward used in the foundation of the Williams Mansion in Yantic. The seminary windows were also used in this Yantic dwelling.

Transportation in those days was by truck from Fitchville to Norwich and necessarily slow. Accordingly, he graded and prepared a foundation for a spur track from the Northern R.R. to Fitchville. But with this scheme and perhaps a hundred others on foot and unfinished his full and useful life came to a close in 1865.

Since then, piece by piece, the Asa Fitch land has been sold as farms until only comparatively a few acres belong to the mill at the present time. After Asa Fitch's death, the cotton mill was operated for a time by his brothers but was finally sold to the Waterman company. This firm was in turn succeeded by the Goddards of Providence, who manufactured cotton cloth, under the name of the Fitchville Manufacturing Company until the mill was destroyed by fire in 1884. Following this disaster, most of the families moved away and for a time Fitchville was a deserted village. Late in 1885, the Palmer Brothers, who owned and operated quilt mills in Montville and New London, recognized the fine manufacturing advantages of the village, so they purchased the site. A mill was built twice as large as the original and the railroad which Mr. Fitch planned was made a reality. Freight was received and discharged daily at Fitchville.

ASA FITCH



Portrait of Asa Fitch, 1865
From a portrait painting by A. H. Brown

LEFFINGWELL

In the early history of Norwich, it often appears as Leppingwell or Leppenwell. This is suggestive of the origin of the name Leaping-Well, denoting a bubbling or boiling spring.

Thomas Leffingwell came over from England about 1630 but it is not definitely known when. It is known that he became acquainted with Uncas in 1637. He was a hunter and a man of unusual physical strength. This seemed to have been true of his descendants for a time as we read--"Some of the Leffingwells have the renown of having been stalwart men, able horsemen, enterprising, robust, dreadnaught kind of people. They would ride to Boston in a day with a led horse for relief and return on the morrow, unconscious of fatigue." Thomas Leffingwell made himself conspicuous in early Connecticut history.

It was the great grandson of this man who became the first settler of what was called Norwich Plains or Leffingwell Town. Samuel, who lived on what is now known as the farm of Leland Palmer, represented his section of the town, Bozrah, at the time of the division of Norwich in 1786. His brothers it is said lived on the Chapman and Deacon Rogers places.

Although this is not a manufacturing section, it can boast of having two mills. One was located on the brook which is the boundary between Montville and Bozrah and was used for manufacturing wooden works for clocks. This was many years ago for it was not within the memory of even the oldest inhabitants. The other mill was owned by Forrest Leffingwell. It was built by Samuel Leffingwell probably one-hundred and fifty years ago. It was an old-fashioned lumber and grist-mill.

The first meeting house was built about 1790, but before this, they had preaching in the open air or in private homes. The meeting house was placed on the rocks across from the present one. At first they did not have the means to complete the house. Some loose boards thrown on the ground formed the only floor and the benches were slabs with pegs stuck in them. The pulpit was an old box and there was neither lath or plaster in the house. This was the first Baptist Church regularly organized and Elder Rogers, their minister was the first Baptist minister ordained within the bounds of the nine mile square of the town of Norwich. One of the men who had much to do with the history of this Church was Reverend Christopher Leffingwell. He was born in Bozrah and for twenty years gave his work entirely to the Churches of Salem and Bozrah. His church in Leffingwell had great prosperity during his ministry.

In 1873 the old building had become so dilapidated that it seemed impossible to repair it so it could be comfortable. Dean J.C. Leffingwell, one of the members of the building committee, gave the land for the new building and it was largely through his efforts that the money was raised for the building. It was completed and dedicated on Christmas Day of the same year.

GILMAN
(BOZRAHVILLE)

In the northwestern part of Bozrah is located the village of Bozrahville, which was at one time in Bozrah's history a thriving manufacturing village where about four hundred people found employment.

In 1690, John Pease established a corn mill on his farm bordering Pease Brook, and this was the beginning of manufacturing in Bozrahville.

In 1814, the Bozrah Manufacturing Co. was formed by New York men who furnished the capital and David L. Dodge of Norwich who suggested and managed the enterprise. Under his direction, the stone mill was built for the manufacture of cotton and woolen goods. A thriving business period followed for some ten years when, because of extensive importation from European manufacturers, the business gradually declined.

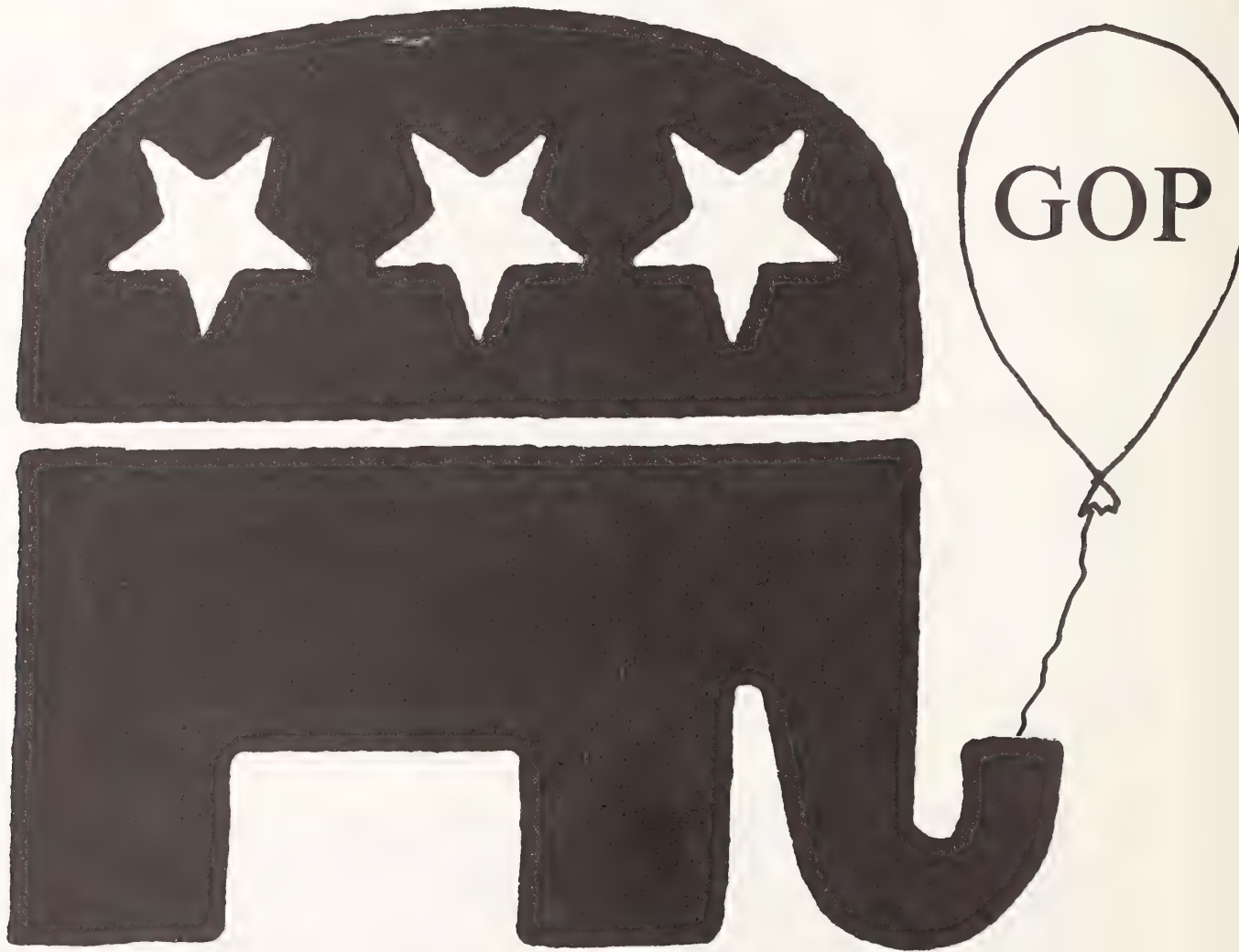
In 1823, the industry passed into the hands of the Thames Company under whose direction the business was conducted until 1837, when the property was sold to James Boorman and other of New York under the firm name of the Kent Manufacturing Co.

As in the early history of Fitchville, transportation was slow and expensive, consequently when the factory was burned, a company willing to rebuild and operate a mill under such poor transportation conditions was slow in being found and the people without employment or hope of employment were forced to seek homes elsewhere, and the village of Bozrahville was abandoned completely for a time.

In 1897 operations were again begun in the part of the mill still standing. The enterprise was followed in succession by the Fairbanks and Plainfield Company and the past mill operator was N. Gilman of New York.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY BOZRAH!!



from the

Bozrah Republicans



**CONGRATULATIONS
TO ALL TOWNS PEOPLE
IN MAKING OUR COMMUNITY
ONE OF THE FINEST
IN CONNECTICUT**

Compliments of
**THE BOZRAH DEMOCRATIC
TOWN COMMITTEE**

Congratulations and Best Wishes

to the People of Bozrah

For their Bicentennial

•

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and

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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LIFE

The colonial houses were large frame buildings built with immense stone chimneys having fireplaces sufficiently large to burn wood four feet in length. Wide outer doors were arranged so that back logs could be drawn into the kitchen by a horse. The Fox house, on Bozrah Street, which was for many years an inn, is built in this way. Huge brick ovens were built beside the fireplace in which all the baking was done. Roasting was done on a spit before the open fire.

Nearly all the furniture was made by local cabinet makers although some homes boasted of mahogany furniture brought from England. The clothing, worn by the majority of the early Bozrah settlers, was made from wool or flax raised on the farm and carded, spun, woven and fashioned into garments by the women in the homes. This was before the invention of the sewing machine and all stitching was done by hand. Knitting was one of the accomplishments of the women and misses of those days who knitted all the stockings, mittens, tippets, and wrist-bands worn by the entire household.

Nearly all the food was raised on the farm. Bread was made from rye flour or rye and corn meal. Very little wheat flour was used except on special occasions such as Thanksgiving Day and Election Day. Quantities of pork and beef were raised and almost every matron made cheeses. These and other farm products, not consumed at home, were marketed in Norwich. Pork brought from five to six cents per pound, beef four to five, corn forty to fifty cents per bushel, potatoes twenty to thirty cents per bushel, eggs ten to twelve cents per dozen and butter ten to twelve cents per pound.

At the Congregational Church, which was the only church in Bozrah in the early times, two sermons were preached each Sunday and everyone was expected to attend both morning and afternoon services. The congregation carried their lunch and dined between services. In pleasant weather the children walked barefoot to church until they neared the place of worship when they added shoes and stockings to their wearing apparel. This church had a tytheing man and it was considered a dire disgrace to receive a reprimand from him. This reprimand was a rap, slight or heavy according to the offense, from a long stick and was given for sleeping, whispering, laughing or being otherwise disorderly during the service. The morning and afternoon sermon lasted not less than two hours each even in the extremely cold weather.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, Bozrah boasted three lyceums one at Bozrahville, one at Fitchville and one at Bozrah Street. Here debates were held. Two of the prominent speakers and regular attendants at these meetings were Peter Pettis, who was the mail carrier for many years and Oramel Johnson.

Travel in those days was largely by horseback. The wife when she went to town rode behind her husband on a pillion. Mail was carried on horseback in saddle bags and on days when school

was in session, the mail carrier stopped at the school house and left the mail with the children to be carried home. "The Norwich Aurora" was the principal mail matter and if by chance someone received a letter it at once became the source of much speculation as to its author and import.

The spelling match and signing school were the chief social functions during the winter months. Quilting bees and house raisings combined industrial accomplishment with labor. At quilting bees the neighbors assembled, usually in the evening, to knot quilts. Quilts also were homemade in those days. At house raisings the men gathered to raise the heavy timbers which formed the frame work of the house. These services were free of charge but the hostess assisted by the other ladies of the neighborhood served a bountiful New England repast to the willing workers and the evening was then spent in merry making by the young and story-telling or social chats by the older people.

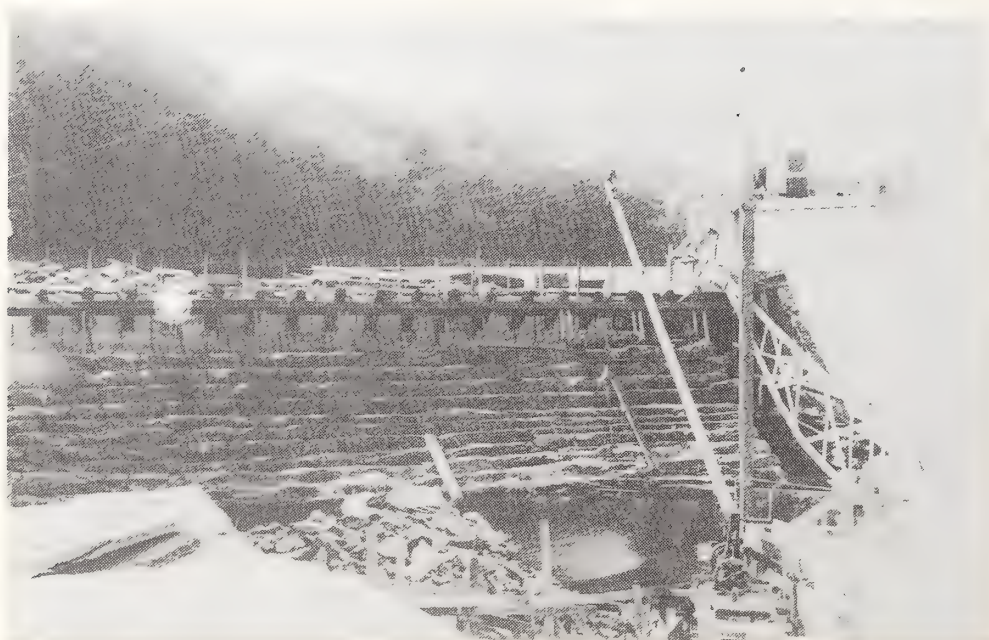
In early New England times, if a manufacturing corporation needed a roadway for transporting goods, the company purchased the necessary land and constructed a thoroughfare. The public was allowed to pass over this road on condition that they pay a small fee for this privilege. In order that no one might escape paying this tax, a toll-gate was placed in the road and a gatekeeper engaged to collect toll from drivers. This money was used to keep the road in repair with the surplus if any paying the expense of building. The road known as the Colchester turnpike, between Norwich and Colchester, built through Fitchville and skirting Bozrahville, was constructed by William Fitch. Later it was purchased by the Norwich and Colchester Turnpike Company. In 1867 the turnpike was purchased by the late William F. Bailey, who was engaged by the Haywood Rubber Company of Colchester in conveying to Norwich by team, their manufactures. He kept about eighty horses to do this trucking and his toll-gate expenses were so large that he decided it would be cheaper to buy the road than to continue paying toll. When the Haywood Rubber Company removed from Colchester, Mr. Bailey's teaming enterprise ended and he gave the road to the several towns through which it passed (i.e.) Norwich, Bozrah, Lebanon and Colchester.

For many years, Mr. Bailey was one of Bozrah's most prominent citizens. He was born on Scott Hill in 1823 and in 1849 purchased the farm near Bozrahville at present owned by John S. Sullivan. This farm consisted of 340 acres of land with a fine residence and farm buildings. While Mr. Bailey was engaged in the trucking business his place resembled a southern plantation. He kept a store, saw mill, grist mill and blacksmith shop to supply his own needs and the needs of the large number which he employed. In 1860 Mr. Bailey represented Bozrah in the State Legislature and in 1872 was a member of the Senate.



TOLLGATE FARM
OLD ROUTE 2
33 ROOMS

FORMER
OLD STONE
ARCH
NEAR CAMP
ODETAH



OLD STONE
FITCHVILLE DAM

STATISTICS OF 1786

BIRTHS

FIRST MALE-William Hough, son of Ebenezer & Bernice Hough
Born 9 August, 1786

FIRST FEMALE-Sally and Nancy Fish, Twin Daughters of
Nathaniel Jr. and Mary Fish
Born 14 August, 1786

DEATHS

Mrs. Lydia (Gifford) Abel, wife of Samuel Abel
Age 82 years died 15 August, 1786

MARRIAGES

Lucy Harris married John Ford
14 August, 1786



MILITARY LIFE

When the Revolutionary War broke out Bozrah was a part of Norwich and there is therefore no record of the part Bozrah settlers took in the war. However, in Norwich military records, we find mention of these Bozrah names: Leffingwell, Hough, Fox, Waterman, Throop and McCall which leads us to believe that Bozrah was well represented in the army that fought for our independence. Mr. McCall along with others was active in the formation of the town.

Bozrah furnished fifty-eight men for the Civil War, this being five percent of the population. Of these, forty-three were privates, four were sergeants, seven were corporals, one musician, one veterinary surgeon and two lieutenants.

In 1862 W. F. Bailey introduced the following resolution at a town meeting--Resolved: that the Town of Bozrah shall pay a bounty of \$50. to every volunteer who has enlisted since the first of July, 1862, or shall hereafter enlist from this town, being resident thereof, pass a medical examination and be sworn into the service of the United States on or before the first day of September, 1862. This was amended to read \$100. and the vote was carried. After the call of President Lincoln in 1864 for 300,000 volunteers, the town voted to pay each man who should enlist or procure a substitute the sum of \$300.

Bozrah had two in the Spanish-American War: Samuel A. Gager, Sergeant of the 2nd Co. Signal Corps, U.S. Volunteers and Edward Price who enlisted in a company which went to the Phillipines and remained there in the service of the United States for many months.

It was voted on October 6, 1919, that the Town of Bozrah pay the committee in charge of arrangements to welcome home the returning soldiers of World War I the sum of \$50. The Selectmen at this time were John L. Sullivan, Albert C. Avery, and Nelson D. Stark.

The Selectmen on February 14, 1938, were authorized to erect a War Memorial to the memory of the Bozrah men engaged in the Military Forces in World War I; the cost not to exceed \$400. On May 29, 1938, the Ambrose J. Rivers Post #138 of the American Legion dedicated this Memorial. It still stands at the intersection of Routes 163 and 608 in front of the Baptist Church. The stone was donated by Stanley Janowicz, the Machine Guns came from the War Department through the efforts of Congressman William J. Fitzgerald, the perpetual lights courtesy of Nathan and Lawrence Gilman of the Bozrah Electric Co. the flag by Gustave Lorentz, the land by the State Highway Department and wall stones courtesy of Palmer Bros. This World War I monument lists thirty-four men.

At a town meeting on October 4, 1948, a proposal designating the school extension as a living memorial to World War II veterans was voted.

On October 8, 1949, an Honor Roll and Memorial was presented to the people of Bozrah by the Gilman family. It stands on the corner of SR 608 and River Road in front of the Town Hall. It lists about one hundred names and reads:

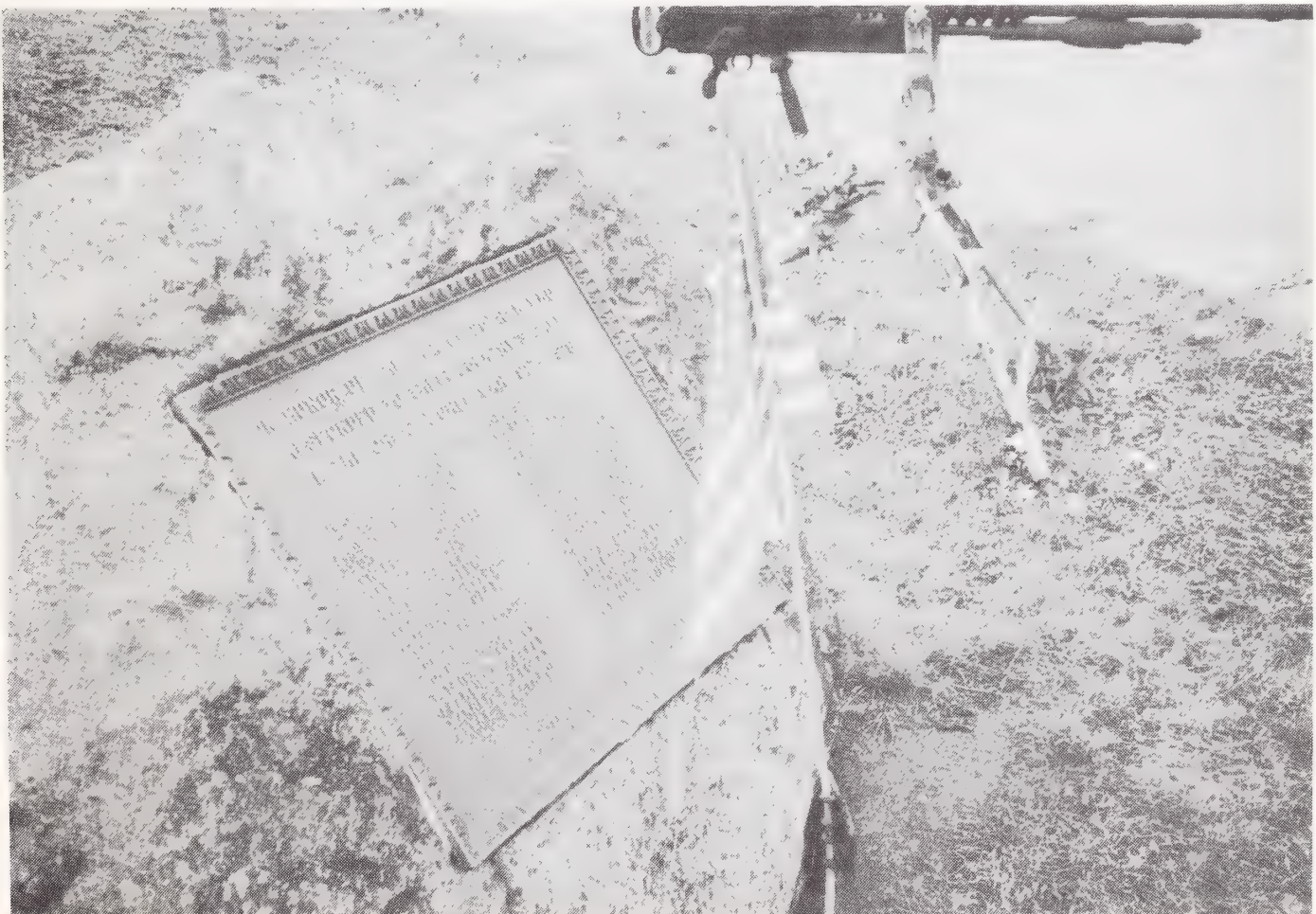
IN GRATEFUL MEMORY OF THOSE MEN AND WOMEN OF BOZRAH WHO GAVE THEMSELF UNRESERVEDLY IN THE HOUR OF THEIR COUNTRY'S NEED IN WORLD WAR II.

A memorial to the Korean and Vietnam Veterans is also located next to the World War II monument. This five foot tall 3,500 pound block of native gray granite was dedicated on Memorial Day, May 30, 1983 by the American Legion Post #138. The inscription on the bronze plaque reads as follows:

KOREA
1950 - 1953

VIETNAM
1965 - 1973

BOZRAH REMEMBERS COURAGEOUS MEN AND WOMEN THAT SERVED
SO GALLANTLY WHEN OUR COUNTRY CALLED IN ITS HOUR OF NEED





THE PALMER BROTHERS

In 1886 the Palmer Bros. who were already large manufacturers of cloth and quilts having factories in New London, Montville, and Fall River, Mass., bought the mill. In the original deed, the land and mill was bought from the Fitchville Mfg. Co. for the sum of \$10,000. The Palmer Bros. signing the transaction were Elisha, Frank, Edward and George Palmer.

The sale included the Mill, Mansion House, blacksmith shop, stone dam, flume and water rights, and four hundred acres of land on both sides of the Yantic River with buildings thereon. This also included the store, meat market, large barn, Fitchville Baptist Church, grist mill near the dam, and the boarding house.

At first rope and cotton cloth were made here but soon they, along with the mill in Montville, began to make quilts.

Edward and Elisha Palmer copied the designs from the beautiful quilts Elisha's daughter was making. Thus began the birth of the quilt manufacturing business.

They were the first manufacturers of quilts in the world and were encouraged by the Montgomery Ward Company who handled their goods along with other companies throughout the world.

George Palmer originally designed and patented the machines that were used to sew the quilts. The quilts were made in many different designs and colors. The Palmer's became world famous for these unique heavy warm quilts.

At their peak Palmer Bros. employed many hundreds of people. They built many new tenements for their people so that in the early 1900's the Village was born near the Town Hall. In order to rent these houses, two families to a house, they had to fill all the bedrooms. The people had to take in boarders of single men that came to work in the mill. The rent was \$2.00 a month.

The Village was self-sufficient, meeting all the needs of the people.

In the early 1900's the stone dam was removed and the present cement dam was built.

Around 1898 the older Palmer Bros. having retired or died the next generation took over the running of the Mill.

The Palmer Bros. in Fitchville now was managed by Frank and Randall the sons of William Palmer.

Frank and his wife Helen lived in the Mansion as did Randall until in later years he married Mary Gribbin.

They ran the mill as before, making heavy shoddy quilts. These were made from old rags shipped in by railroad in large bails. The rags were first sterilized then they were put through machines called pickers that made a sort of matt called shoddy.

Later they introduced cotton quilts that were lighter in weight.

The beginning of the end came when central heating of homes became popular and people didn't need the heavy quilts. To take their place beautiful down quilts made with satin and taffeta cloth was introduced and became very popular. Crib quilts were also made.

A quilt called a zig zag was introduced and became popular as a light weight quilt, low in price. These were made by the yard so it didn't take as many people to make them.

A new line of merchandise making its way in the bedding industry was mattresses.

In 1935 the Palmer's began to sell most of their property. All houses were sold; first choice was given to the persons living at that time in the house. The selling prices were from \$800 to \$2,000. This was considered a fair price at that time.

They still retained the Mill and Mill property.

Great damage was dealt the Mill in the 1938 Hurricane. The large square chimney collapsed. Later a new round one was built. The flood did great damage to the lower floors of the Mill.

The Hurricane also completely destroyed the mill in New London. The land was sold to the A&P Stores. The largest store of its kind was built in New London; the forerunner of the Supermarket. Today it is owned by S.N.E.T. Co. who put on an addition.

The Mill in Montville was also hurt badly, so it was decided to just concentrate on the Fitchville Mill.

New people came to Fitchville to try and save one business. These had different names but were related to the Palmer's, Reed Johnson, Wells Lyman, Reynold Palmer a half brother to Frank and Randall. The main office was moved from the back of the Mansion to the Mill complex.

They transported by open buses office workers and in separate buses mill workers from Montville to Fitchville each day.

The Mill was run until the Second World War started and slowly they were not able to purchase supplies. The men who worked there either went to war or to work in the defense factories.

A sad ending was in store for this great mill. It lay idle for many years renting parts to other concerns.

In the 1960's Julius Rytman bought the mill complex and it was used to raise chickens. In 1972 after several previous fires, the main building was destroyed by fire.

The rubble was cleaned up and is now just vacant land.

Seymour Adelman bought the rights to the waterway and now owns the pond and the Dam.



FITCHVILLE MILL

SIDE VIEW



STOCKHOUSES



PALMER BROS. EMPLOYEES

HISTORIC PLACES

1916 Essay by Three School Teachers

On the former Everett N. Stark farm on the south side of Bozrah Street, now route 163, near the top of the so-called Gay Hill, is located a Mineral Spring, which is still owned by a descendant of Mr. Stark.

According to tradition this spring was known to the Mohegan Indians as, "Medicine Springs" and they visited it each summer, camping near by for two or three weeks. When grandfather of Mr. Stark purchased this farm the owner told him of the Indian practice and said he need have no fear when they made their annual visit as this was their custom and no one ever disputed their right. As late as 1808 the tribe still visited the spring and for many years later, smaller numbers came and carried away quantities of water in jugs and other vessels.

Mr. Stark soon developed this spring, and built up a very profitable business, the water, of the finest quality, was bottled and shipped to various places in New England.

In 1885 an agreement was made to form the Bozrah Mineral Spring Company for the purpose of dealing, manufacturing and selling Mineral Water, Soda Water, and fermented products. Later in this same year Mr. Stark leases the Spring, known as the Stark Mineral Spring, together with a portion of the farm to outside interests.

This business apparently continued until about 1895, when Mr. Stark conveys the property to William A. & Jane E. Burgess, reserving the Spring and a parcel of land on which the Spring is located, together with a right of way from the highway.

Years ago there was a pavilion near the spring, where picnics and other social events were enjoyed. To document the above, an article appeared in the Norwich Bulletin of 7 July 1884, mentioning that a four horse team carried some forty or more people from Bozrahville to Stark's Mineral Spring, where they had a clam bake.

Mr. Stark also owned a farm of about 140 acres in Fitchville, where on 9 March 1899 he organized and formed the Bozrah Creamery Association, many an old timer can remember the excellent dairy products that were sold at this Creamery, which was located on the Fitchville Road (Old Route 2), the building is still standing.

INCIDENTS IN BOZRAH HISTORY

The following account of a remarkable hail storm which took place in this town, in July, 1799, is taken from the Connecticut Journal, copied from the Connecticut Gazette.

Bozrah, Monday, July 15, 1799

On Monday, July 15th the inhabitants of the southern part of Lebanon and of the towns of Bozrah and Franklin adjoining, experienced the most awful and devastating storm of wind, attended with hail, and rain, thunder and lightning, probably ever known in our county. About five o'clock p.m., a dark angry cloud gradually arose from the south. It continued increasing and gathering blackness and rapidly of motion as it rose. In about half an hour, after a cloud of a brass or flame color seemed to roll up in front of it, like a column of smoke, which presently overspread it, growing brighter and appearing more wild and agitated. At this time an extensive black cloud, before unperceived, rose along from the northwest to the southwest, similar to the first, and in a little time formed a junction with it, when they directly shot their united summits high in the air, and the whole hemisphere by six o'clock was covered with almost the darkness of night, emitting sharp forked lightning, followed with heavy thunder. A calm of a few minutes succeeded, while the birds and beasts, guided by instinct, fled for refuge, as portending some great calamity. The wind with a distinct, roar, soon began to blow with great violence, and increased almost to a hurricane, when, astonishing to behold, hail stones of a prodigious size, two and three inches in diameter, were driven with almost the force of grapes shot upon everything in its course. They were at first scattering, but in a moment came thicker and larger, until they fell in a complete shower of ice, so great as to prevent an object from being distinguished at the distance of two or three rods. Directly, scarce an inch of glass was left in the windows next to the storm, and in some instances the sashes were broken; shingles were split and beat off the roofs of houses and barns, and vegetation almost wholly laid waste by the fury of the hail; while the wind overturned trees. unroofed, removed, or destroyed barns and fences. Every thing seemed in confusion and uproar, and men and beasts were silent with astonishment. This scene lasted, according to different judgments, ten, fifteen and twenty minutes, though most agree that the greatest discharge of hail fell in a shorter time. When the hail ceased a shower of rain, more abundant if possible, immediately followed, and collecting, ran with violence, swept the hail into large waves, and the ruins into heaps, and bore them away promiscuously to the torrents and low grounds, presenting a most singular and melancholy sight. After an hour

had abated, the sun, just setting broke through the clouds, and afforded a prospect dreary and gloomy beyond description. The earth seemed almost desolate and a waste. The poor beasts were objects of the first attention. The cattle were found alive though, sadly bruised and wounded; the backs of cows were bloody, legs of horses cut and swollen. The smaller animals suffered much more. Some pigs of four months old, with sheep, were killed; numbers of geese, and turkeys exposed, were beat to death. Birds are daily found in large numbers, in the fields and gardens, dead and maimed. Buildings and fences are seen bruised to such a degree that they will long remain standing proofs of the violence and size of the hail.

The horrors of the scene, and the ravages of the storm, are truly indescribable. Many of us sufferers can only compare them with their ideas of the day of judgment. The hail stones were so large as to be taken for the falling of bricks from a chimney upon the roofs of the houses. After the rain, which must have washed them, they were carefully examined in different places, and found to measure, some four and a half inches by five and a half in circumference, others six inches; some six inches by nearly seven. They are generally compared, by spectators, to the full size of hens and geese eggs. Banks of hail, five or six inches deep, remained on the Saturday and Sunday following, and some measured then three and a half inches around. They were, generally, more flat than round, with ragged edges. The course of the storm was chiefly from the southwest to the northeast, though sometimes the hail came from the south, and then again nearly from the west.

OTHER INCIDENTS IN BOZRAH HISTORY

In September 1815 Bozrah was swept by a terrific storm which has been since referred to as the September Gale. Houses were blown down, trees uprooted and serious destruction and damage resulted. In 1816 the house occupied by the late John Gager was built from timbers saved from trees blown over in this gale. The year 1816 was known as the year without a summer. In May ice formed one-half inch thick on ponds and streams. There was frost every month consequently no corn was raised and very few crops matured.

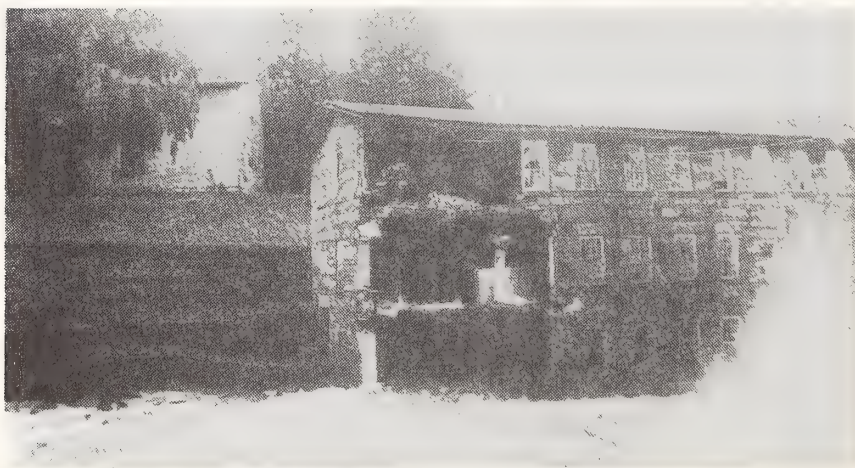
Seven years later Bozrah had the greatest freshet ever known in its history. Every bridge in the town was carried off, it is said and the Fitch Iron works were entirely swept away.

On September 21, 1938 about mid-day, a hurricane destroyed a great deal in Bozrah. The stockhouse roof blew off, also the steeple on the Fitchville Baptist Church. The Scott Hill Baptist Church was a total loss. A part of the grist mill near the dam was washed away by high water. Many barns and silos were blown down, along with many trees and power lines. Roads were washed out along the rivers and brooks.

1938 HURRICANE
FITCHVILLE BRIDGE SHOWING BAPTIST CHURCH STEEPLE



BEFORE
STORM



DAMAGED GRIST MILL

STOCKHOUSE ROAD-MILL FIRES
RAYMOND C. BARBER, BVFD CHIEF 1967-1980

Between August, 1969 and July, 1972 four of the most devastating fires in the history of the Town of Bozrah leveled the entire Palmer Bros. mill complex and stockhouses. These fires changed forever the appearance of the center of Fitchville.

The first fire was on August 18, 1969, at the building near the railroad crossing which was owned by the Wirthmore Grain Company and was used for the mixing, storage and distribution of animal feed products. This fire was believed to have started from a railroad car full of peanut skins that were to be mixed for chicken feed. The Bozrah Fire Department and five other volunteer fire companies fought this blaze for six hours before it was brought under control. When the intense heat from this fire threatened the nearby stockhouses the firemen had to concentrate on saving these buildings. The grain company was a total loss.

Approximately two years later on August 5, 1971, the next fire occurred at the storage building near the railroad siding. Volunteer fire companies from Bozrah, Lebanon, East Great Plains, Franklin, Baltic, Yantic and Colchester fought this blaze for over eight hours. They were successful in their efforts to prevent the fire from extending into the adjoining mill complex which contained over 100,000 chickens. Four firemen were injured when a section of a wall collapsed.

The next fire was on May 30, 1972. This was the largest fire to date and completely leveled over eight hundred feet of a four story building (large stockhouse) and killed 120,000 chickens. It melted electric and telephone wires and required the total efforts of seven volunteer fire companies, two hundred fifty firemen, one thousand five hundred man hours and sixteen pieces of apparatus to bring under control. By mid June, 1972, this area had been filled in and the only remaining building was the main mill; but not for long.

On July 9, 1972 at 1:50 a.m. the alarm was received at the Norwich Dispatch Center that the main Palmer Bros mill in Fitchville was fully involved in fire. The building was empty at the time although new shavings had just been spread in anticipation of the arrival of new chickens the next day. The fire was especially challenging for firemen as large burning embers were landing on houses across the river from the mill. Eight other volunteer fire companies answered Bozrah's call for mutual aid. They were Yantic, East Great Plains, Oakdale, Franklin, South Windham, Baltic, Lebanon and Colchester. A total of three hundred volunteer firemen and twenty pieces of fire fighting equipment fought this fire for over twelve hours until it was declared under control. Thousands of spectators from

throughout the state came to witness the end of an era as the fire completely destroyed the entire mill.

In the weeks following the fire the buildings, smoke stacks and clock tower were knocked down and the lot was leveled changing the face of Fitchville forever. These fires also had a devastating effect on the finances of the Town of Bozrah as taxes had to be raised to replace the revenue lost from the destroyed buildings.





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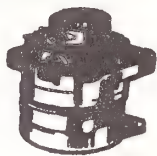
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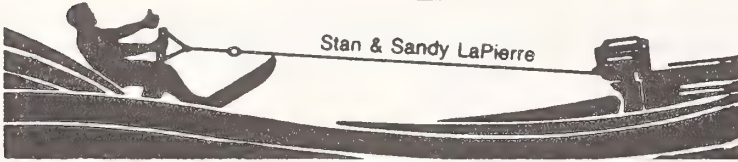
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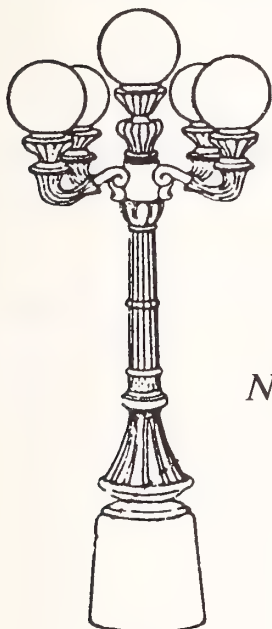
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Doug Barber ♥ Kim Viadella

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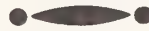
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MEMORIES
Mary Bently-Bendett

Fitchville, I remember it well. I was born in Yantic, Connecticut, but my family moved to Fitchville when I was very young. The Palmer Brothers owned the quilt mill as well as the company houses. Generations of Irish Catholics worked in the mill. Their names read like an Irish Litany. Sullivan, McManus, Brady, Sweeney, McCarthy, and Murphy were just a few.

As a child, I believed that Fitchville was a perfect place and wondered why anyone would ever want to leave. It had everything, a school, two churches, a hall, a boarding house, a store, a mill, a baseball field at Cannon Hill, and even a mansion (Fitch House). I considered the mansion as a bit of old England transplanted in an American setting. Frank Palmer, his wife Helen, and his brother Randall lived there for as long as I can remember. The grounds were always perfectly maintained and their privacy insured by a high black iron fence. A carriage house and a small servants quarters were included in the property.

Residents didn't need to leave the village to seek entertainment, the Palmers furnished movies every Monday night, upstairs in the hall. John Beswick operated the machine and I played for the silent movies. I was paid two dollars for the night's work. Plays with local people as actors, were presented regularly, Francis Gribbin Sr. and later his sister Mary, coached the players. Dances were held often with orchestras furnishing the music. We always knew when the last dance was ending when we heard the strains of "Good Night Ladies"

Today house calls by a physician are rare; in the early days they were common place. Dr. Cassidy in his battered carriage, driven by his tired old horse was a familiar sight on the bumpy country roads, as he visited the sick. Even undertakers conducted their business in the home of the deceased. To attend a Catholic wake in Fitchville was a bittersweet experience. There was sadness at the death of a relative or friend, but there was also an outpouring of love and sympathy. The wake continued for three days and nights and took on the aspect of a last hurrah for the departing friend. Food and drinks were served, stories were told, and humorous incidents in the life of the deceased were recalled. I shall long remember the prayers and faith of the mourners.

I was the organist at St. John's following my cousin, Henrietta Authier. Her mother and three sisters comprised the choir.

After eighty years, my date with destiny is fast approaching. How I wish it could be in Fitchville, my "Old Home Town".

MEMORIES
Annie L. Follett

The Fitchville Baptist Church, the Recreation Hall (now the Town Hall), the Mansion and some of the mill buildings erected by Asa Fitch, wherein he used some of the native granite, quarried from ledges on his own properties, on lands back of the Center Congregational Church and off Brush Hill Road, are works of art still in use. A young ladies seminary was built near the railroad crossing on what is now known as Stockhouse Road. This was later dismantled, and the granite stones used to build the house in Yantic (or rather the foundation), known as the Williams Mansion, and occupied by Winslow W. Williams.

On the hill-top near the Fitch Mansion was located the Reservoir which supplied water to surrounding property. Around this reservoir, Mr. Fitch had a bridal path where he used to ride. Into the side of this hill, or ledge, and facing the Mansion, Mr. Fitch built beautiful Grottoes, and in the stone-work of one, there are stones from around the world. At the present time, these are in a state of crumbling decay and ruin.

In 1886 the Palmer Brothers Company, with mills in New London and Montville, put a quilt mill into operation in a newly built stone mill, on the site of the previous mill built by Asa Fitch, and which was burned in 1884. They did a world-wide business in quilts and it was with deep regret that the citizens of the town saw the Palmer Brothers Company "fold-up" in 1949.

In the northwestern part of the town is Bozrahville, which is now called Gilman, and noted for its mills since 1690. First a corn or grist mill, run by John Pease; later in 1814 the Bozrahville Manufacturing Company operated a cotton and woolen mill; in 1824 the industry was under the direction of the Thames Company; in 1837 it was run by the Kent Manufacturing Company. Since 1907 Mr. Nathan Gilman has manufactured shoddy there - more recently manufacturing insulation.

In September 1815 Bozrah was swept by a terrific storm which has always been known as the "September Gale". Houses were blown down, trees uprooted and serious destruction and damage resulted.

In 1822 there was the "Great Flood". Every bridge in town was swept away, also the Fitch Iron Works.

William F. Bailey, born Aug 17, 1823 on Scott Hill, purchased a farm in Bozrahville in 1849 (now the Sullivan Farm) and with Elisha Waterman engaged in the teaming business for the Haywood Rubber Company of Colchester. Later Mr. Bailey bought out Mr. Waterman and conducted the teaming business alone. His farm consisted of three hundred forty acres, and with the house on one side of the road and the barn on the opposite side, they were connected by an underground passage. Mr. Bailey also conducted a store, saw mill, grist mill, and blacksmith shop. He was a Republican, and in 1860 attended the General Assembly as Bozrah's Representative; then in 1872 he became a member of the State Senate.

BOZRAH BASEBALL MEMORIES
BY
JOHN FIELDS

The first team was in 1890. The first ball field was between the store and the present school. The team that played there was Miah Fields, Big Tim Fields, Florenz McCarthy, Small Tim Fields, John H. Fields, John F. Fields, Dan Mara and Tim Coughlin. Miah Fields and Big Tim Fields went on to play semi-pro ball.

In 1912 the Field was moved to Cannon Hill, behind the present school. Those that played there were John Lynch, Tom Sweeney, Pat Sullivan, Pat Lynch, Bill Kane, Tim Fields, Ernie Smith, Ed Healey, and Tim Coughlin.

In the 1930's the ball field moved to the plains back of the Allyn Home. The team was called Fitchville A. C. and was a member of the intercounty league. This team set a record winning the championship three years in a row, only losing one game during this time. The players were E. Hammel, Fred Marchand, Hal Cummings, Chuby Gibbs, Gil Kampf, Steve Kozerski, Itch Berkman, Jerry Lamphere, Francis Gribbin, John Fields, Pat Sullivan, Albert Tolson, Red Juknis, Huck Rodgers, Gil Jones, Alto Hall, John Carter and the score keeper was Walter Johnson.

In the late 1930's Palmer Bros. had a mill league that played every Saturday. The teams were Fitchville, Montville, and New London.



FIRST BASEBALL TEAM OF FITCHVILLE

THE FITCH TRACK
BY: FRED R. GERBER

The familiarly called "Fitch Race Track", so-named after the members of the Fitch family, who were fond of thorough-bred horses, originally built for the purpose of breaking and training horses, was in use for sometime before the Fitch's acquired title to the farm upon which the track is located.

The track was about 1/2 mile west along old Route 2, from the Bozrah-Norwich Town Line, it completely encircled a pond on the north side of this highway.

I start with one of the first families that settled here in the Town of Bozrah long before its incorporation in 1786, namely the "Watermans".

The ancestors of Captian Nehemiah Waterman acquired considerable acreage in various sections of our Town, including the area upon which the track was built and an existng dwelling house, later called the Claremont House. The family was very active in church, town and military affairs.

David H. Waterman, son and one of the heirs of the Captain, living in this section, a farmer and State Representative from Bozrah, member of the Conn. Assembly in 1844 and a Selectman of the Town, acquired title to what was later called the "Waterman Farm". With buildings thereon from the other heirs, who collectively agreed on the 20th June 1848 to convey their interest in the Captain's estate, by a Quit-Claim deed for \$7,000.00

David H. Waterman agreed to erect a suitable number of horse stalls in the old barn on the farm and also erect a new partition between the kitchen and the dining room in the dwelling house and to make the necessary repairs required to make the house into a Public house or Hotel.

He also agreed to permit Samuel K. Raymond for his own use and benefit to locate and construct on said leased premises an elliptical track, being partly on the Barn lot, so-called and encircling a pond on the adjacent lot. The track to be about one-half of a mile in extent and about 30 feet in width, for the purpose of breaking and training horses. The above appears to be the start of the track and its location.

Asa Fitch Esq. was the first Fitch to own the 300 Acre (at that time) Waterman farm, upon which this track had been built.

Asa Fitch Esq. died intestate 30 October 1865, the inventory of his estate taken in 1866, showed that the Waterman farm was valued at \$9,000.00, also listed were eight colts by a Hambletonian horse, valued at \$1,000.00 These colts were apparently bred on this farm, there was no mention made of the track.

Stephen Fitch, son of Col. Asa, born 21 August 1790, in Bozrah, was reared on the farm and to the iron business with his father, and he continued thus occupied until his marriage. He then removed to New Hartford, New York, and was engaged there in agricultural pursuits until 1832, when he returned to Conn., after the death of his wife in 1837, he removed to Bozrah and became engaged in the manufacture of cotton goods, associated with his brother Asa Fitch, Esq. at Fitchville. Stephen was also interested in horses and kept some very fine thorough-breds.

Stephen Fitch on 23 June 1868 conveys seven tracts of land including the sixty-three Acre plus, called the second tract to his son William Huntington Fitch, who is the last member of the Fitch family to own and occupy the old "Waterman Farm". The Claremont house by this time could of been used as a dwelling and not as a Hotel.

William Huntington Fitch was born 4 November 1830 in New Hartford, New York, when two years old the family returned to Connecticut and resided in the Town of Norwich, until 1837, they then removed to Fitchville. William traveled quite a bit, but always kept an interest in the family business. In 1859 he became associated with his uncle Asa at Fitchville under the name of W. H. Fitch and Co., manufacturers of cotton goods.

In 1867 he retired to a farm of some three hundred Acres (Waterman) which later he owned, this farm beautifully situated between Yantic and Fitchville, was one of the show places in the locality, well watered and improved, its buildings modern and well kept, one attraction was the huge wagon shed with horse-drawn farming equipment stored therein facing the highway near the house.

Mr. Fitch also kept some fast trotters, no doubt some of them pulling a sulky were exercised on this track on his farm, considered to be one of the best half-mile tracks in the state.

On the 8th of March 1902, he sells the farm, including the track and the former Claremont House, now used as a dwelling, with adjacent buildings to a Charles E. White of Andover, Conn.

The property adjacent to and west of Asa Fitch's Waterman Farm was inherited by William Fitch, brother of Asa, he was born 27 October 1800 in Bozrah and was brought up on his father's farm, there assisted in season with the farming operations. At age 15 he entered Bacon Academy of Colchester from which institution he graduated.

In 1820 he joined the New York branch of the Fitch establishment until 1848, when he returned to Bozrah and became associated with his brother Asa in the manufacturing business. William Fitch moved to the Town of Norwich in 1858, some time before Asa acquired the Waterman property, here he operated a well equipped farm until his death 23 December 1880. He still farmed his Bozrah property, and like other members of the family,

was interested in Hambletonian horses and other thorough-breds. A poster recently discovered mentions that a Fitch Hambletonian stallion, purchased of William Fitch of Norwich, Conn. by H. H. Rockwell and W. H. Allen, will make a short season at the Metropolitan Stables, New London, Conn. on 1 May 1871.

This Fitch Hambletonian is a bronze bay 15 3/4 hands high and weighs 1050 pounds, was sired by Rysdyk's Hambletonian, considered to be one of the ancestors of fast trotters.

It could be possible that this stallion mentioned in the poster was one of the colts listed in the inventory of Asa's estate, and interited by William and raised at either his Bozrah or Norwich farms.

One of America's most prestigious harness races, the Hambletonian, was held recently at Meadowlands track near East Rutherford, New Jersey.

Mr. Fitch disposed of his Bozrah farm on 30 March 1880 to a Mr. John Kilroy.

Charles E. White did not retain possession of the farm for long, and on 23 March 1903 he transfers title of the two tracts of land with buildings thereon standing to the Yantic Woolen Company, operated by the Williams Family, of the Town of Norwich, with several reservations, none affecting the track.

The Woolen Company really worked the farm and several local people were employed as farmers during the Company's ownership, some of these folks lived in the Waterman house, some old timers in the area can remember seeing sheep grasing on the flats along the Yantic River, no evidence that sheep were raised for their wool by the company.

1 March 1912, the Yantic Woolen Co. a short time before they went into receivership, sells the two parcels of land with buildings thereon to Oliver C. Gardner of North Adams, Mass. with reservations, none affecting the track. The second parcel described in this deed contains the track and the former Waterman house.

No record seems available to indicate that Mr. Gardner actually ran the farm, whatever work was necessary was done by hired help, under his supervision.

Oliver C. Gardner died 23 April 1936, still owner of most of the original acreage.

Bozrah land records show that the farm now is starting to be divided and a number of new owners appear, among them were Myrtle W. Meditz and the late John M. Meditz, who purchased the Waterman house, adjacent buildings and land on 27 March, 1940.

The Waterman house was torn down to the first floor and then rebuilt the upper portion as it is today, presently occupied by the Warren A. Strong family.

In 1945 Mr. Herbert H. Riess, a Real Estate developer obtained part of the farm, including the track area, dividing up

On 9 May 1984 the Bozrah Moose Lodge #950, Inc. became owners of the former Lorentz & Howard, Inc. property which includes a portion of what appears to be the original exercise track, well defined, located on the north side of the enlarged pond, north east of their Home on old Route 2.

1934 AERIAL PICTURE OF THE
FITCH FAMILY RACE OR EXERCISE TRACK
1863 - 1902 FORMERLY DAVID H. WATERMAN FARM



CEMETERIES & LOCATIONS
COMPILED BY
FRED R. GERBER

Early places of sepulture for the dead were called church yards, burial places, burial grounds and recently cemeteries.

It is found the name cemetery is derived from the Greek, meaning "a sleeping-place" and related to the Latin, meaning "quiet". The name was first applied to the places set apart for the burial of the dead and considered consecrated ground.

On the 11th of May, 1786 there were three well established cemeteries, in the Town known today as Parker or Bozrah Street, Gardner-Bulkeley and Bozrah Rural, where burials had taken place prior to 1786. Other cemeteries were developed at a later date, including several family sites on private property.

A number show the effects of time; sunken gravestones, half covered over by growing turf, many are prostrate, others leaning with defaced inscriptions, all sadly neglected by all mankind, especially the descendants of those who occupy these graves.

Cemeteries throughout the town have had their locations mapped and headstone inscriptions of burials up to 1934, copied for posterity, compiled under the supervision of Charles R. Hale, State Military Necrologist. From these inscriptions of burials it might be possible to determine roughly where the largest number of inhabitants may have lived, their names and how many in 1786.

In these "silent cities of the dead", are buried the founders of our town and many prominent citizens who contributed to its history, along with the veterans who fought in our countrys wars. It is well not only to cherish the memory of our ancestors, but to show a kindly respect for their remains and burial places.

It is interesting to study the development of Tombstone styles in our cemteries. On many old gray and brown gravestones are carved skulls with wings in a variety of shapes, some are exceedingly ugly, it is said to ward off the evil spirits from the departed. These skulls with piercing eyes all return the visitors gaze with a stoney glare.

Along the sides of some of these stones are symbols and emblems, relating to Christian virtues and attributes. Leafage is a common symbol and is typical of Christ and of growth and expansion. The ivy is symbolic of memory, also friendship. Flowers suggest beauty, wreaths suggest perpetuation of memory. These are only a few of such symbols and emblems that may be seen.

There are a number of maps available that show the locations of the larger cemeteries, one in particular is the Connecticut

Geological Survey map of the Fitchville Quadrangle, which includes the entire Town of Bozrah.

BOZRAH RURAL: Formerly known as THROOP BURYING GROUND OR JOHNSON CEMETERY, located on SR 608 or Old Route 2. It is the largest and one of the oldest, especially the lower section along the highway and west of the roadway leading to the new or upper section.

A portion of this old section was set off for a cemetery when Bozrah was New Concord Society and part of Norwich. On 18 February, 1742/43, Francis & Elizabeth Smith, for five pounds, current money, granted one-half acre of land to Capt. Samuel Lathrop, Jr., one of the Selectmen of the Town of Norwich, for the use of the inhabitants of New Concord Society for the decent burying of its dead.

The need for additional land arose and on 25 March, 1870, Isaac Johnson conveys to the Trustees of the cemetery, all the premises enclosed by a wall that had been built by the association, or all that is indicated on a plan drawn by C.R. Bushnell, totaling an area of about six point four acres.

On 29 June, 1870, the Connecticut Assembly approved the formation of the association to be known as the "Bozrah Rural Cemetery Association", as it is called today.

Documented in Hale's report on cemetery headstone inscriptions of burials, 1744-1934, there appears to be about one hundred fifty-six of these in the oldest section, indicating that at least this number were inhabitants that may have been living in or around this area in 1786.

The earliest burial in the lower section is Joseph Hillard, consort of Mrs. Freelove, died 25 December, 1744, age 33 years. The earliest burial in the new or upper section is Susannah Fitch, wife of Col. Asa Fitch, died 22 August 1814.

This cemetery is still active. The overseer is Mr. Robert Calvert. Entrance is from Old Route 2 and Schwartz Rd.

PARKER OR BOZRAH STREET: Considered to be the oldest cemetery in the Town of Bozrah, located in a section which at one time was called, "Bozrah Center". It is on Route 163.

One acre of land, more or less, entirely enclosed by a stonewall, and known as the Burying Ground, was conveyed by the estate of Capt. Ebenezer Hough, to several individuals on 19 June, 1847, to be used and improved as a Burying Ground or place to bury the dead.

A 1934 cemetery report on headstones and their inscriptions of burials here, mentions that there are several field stones, no inscriptions and a number of unmarked graves, also sixty-nine headstones with inscriptions, thirty-six of these indicate that

this number of individuals may have been living in or around this area in 1786.

The earliest burial is Mrs. Elizabeth Rudd, wife of Daniel Rudd, daughter of Ensign Thomas Bingham, died 29 July, 1741, last burial 1893.

This cemetery is not active. The entrance is from Route 163.

GARDNER-BULKELEY: Formerly known as the GARDNER CEMETERY, situated on the east side of the old road running parallel with Route 163, about four hundred feet north of the Bozrah-Montville town line.

This cemetery is on a landscaped knoll, encircled by a stonewall and is one of the oldest in town. The farm upon which it is located was acquired by Stephen Gardner on 24 January, 1737. It has remained in the family for five generations.

Morgan G. Bulkeley, (a descendant of the Gardner family) acquired the farm and cemetery and with Alvah F. Gardner, on 17 March, 1917, formed the Gardner-Bulkeley Cemetery Association, which was approved on the 25 April, 1917, by the Connecticut Secretary of State, thereby creating the name Gardner-Bulkeley Cemetery, as it is called today.

A bronze plaque is on each gate post at its entrance, indicating the cemetery name and that it was restored by Morgan Gardner Bulkeley, 1917.

Documented in Hale's report on cemetery headstone inscriptions, 1743-1934, there are about twenty of these that relate to individuals, that may have lived in or about this area in 1786.

Earliest burial, Stephen Gardner, died 9 February, 1743.

Cemetery affairs are managed by Elinor B. Ingersoll of 29 Mallard Drive, Unionville, Conn. 06085.

This cemetery is still active with Mrs. Rosaire Brochu, resident care-taker, who resides in the house adjacent to burial ground.

Entrance is from the old road and Route 163.

Permission is required before entering.

STARK FAMILY CEMETERY: Partially surrounded by property now or formerly owned by Mr. and Mrs. Burton Avery, Jr. on the north side of Route 163. Enter from the road leading to the Bozrah Landfill site.

The cemetery is enclosed by a stonewall. It is in the northwest corner of an open field or pasture, southerly from the house. Sixteen headstones with inscriptions of burials are listed in Hale's 1934 cemetery report, four of these relate to inhabitants that may have been living in or around this area in 1786.

GARDNER-BUCKLEY CEMETERY



BOZRAH RURAL CEMETERY

Earliest burial, Julia Ann Stark, daughter of Zophar and Prudence Stark, died 17 September, 1813, age four years and six months. The last burial was in 1897.

The cemetery is not active.

Permission is required from property owners before entering.

WIGHTMAN: Corner of Bashon Hill Road at its intersection with Scott Hill Road, near the Grange Hall. A very small cemetery entirely enclosed by a stonewall.

Hale's 1934 cemetery report, states that there are several field stones with no inscriptions and about fourteen headstones with inscriptions of burials. Six of these can be traced to families that may have been living in or around this area in 1786.

The earliest burial was Volentine Wightman who died 8 May, 1814, at age 82. The last burial was 1905.

Cemetery is not active. Entrance is from Bashon Hill Rd.

OLD LEFFINGWELL: Reserved by members of the Leffingwell family and others as an ancient Burying Ground. It is located on a knoll or ridge of land, containing about one-half acre, more or less, and its bounds being the base of said knoll or ridge.

It is about three hundred, fifty feet north of the Old Salem Turnpike Road and in the rear of the former Tibbals house; a white house setting back from the road.

Quoting Frances M. Caulkins 1866 History of Norwich, "In a field upon old Leffingwell land in this district, there is a quiet village of the dead, where Leffingwells, Chapmans, Posts and other names of the vicinity are found".

This cemetery shows the affects of time and neglect. Recorded in Hale's 1934 cemetery report there are a number of unmarked graves and about fifty-eight headstones with inscriptions of burials, thirty of these indicate that at least this number of individuals may have been living in or around Leffingwell-town in 1786.

Earliest burial was Prudence Chapman who died 28 December, 1792. The last burial was in 1882.

This cemetery is not active.

Investigate to determine owner of the former Tibbals property, for permission to enter.

HOUGH-HARRIS: Often called SCOTT HILL CEMETERY. It is so named apparently after a prominent Doctor by the name of John Scott.

It is situated on about the top of the hill, partially surrounded by property now or formerly owned by Mr. and Mrs. Donald Johnson, Jr., about three hundred feet south of Scott Hill

Road and is in the rear of the Johnson house. It is enclosed by a stonewall.

Twenty-two headstones with inscriptions of burials, are listed in Hale's 1934 Cemetery report. Eleven of these relate to inhabitants that may have been living in or around this area in 1786.

The earliest burial is Amelia Foot, wife of Capt. Wood and daughter of Doctor John Scott, who died 20 February, 1791 at the age of eighteen years. The last burial was in 1882.

This cemetery is not active.

Permission required from property owners before entering.

CHURCH:Private cemetery. No comments available.

BAILEY-WIGHTMAN:Private cemetery. No comments available.

From these reports please notice that the largest number of residents appear to have lived in or about the Bozrahville, Bashon Hill and Fitchville area, a total of about 165 individuals. Bozrah Center and Scott Hill area, a total of 51, Leffingwell area 30, and Gardner Lake section 20, making a grand total of about 266 in 1786.

PARKER CEMETERY



STARK FAMILY CEMETERY



WIGHTMAN CEMETERY

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Fitchville, Connecticut



in memory of our ancestors

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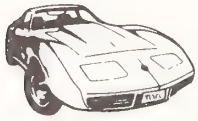




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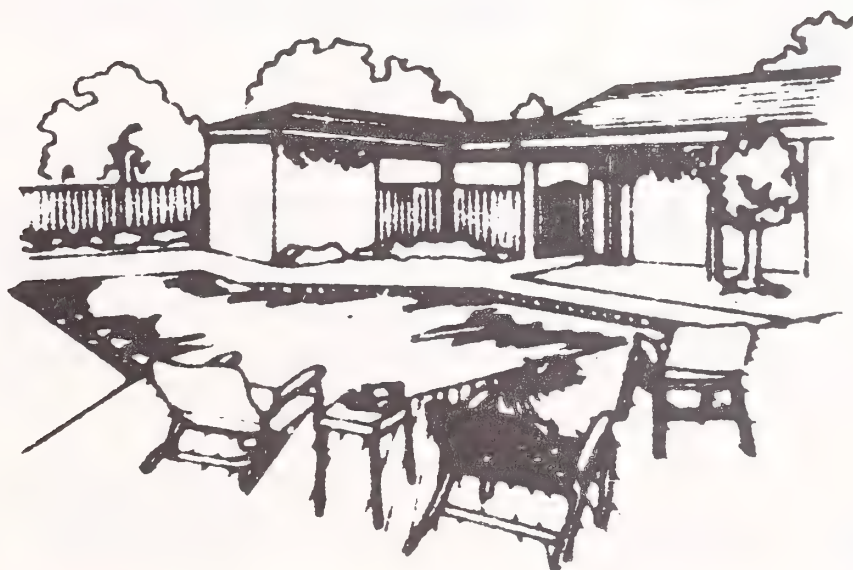


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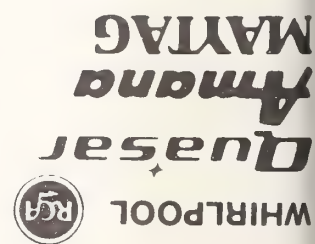
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BOZRAH CENTER CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Oldest Church in Town

Route 163, Bozrah

Workshop Service 11:00 A.M.

Sunday School 9:45 A.M.

BOZRAH CENTER CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
(NEW CONCORD SOCIETY)

The Colonists who came here were Puritans at heart. They had been persecuted in England, and expected to establish a Zion. They were determined to make their Church Society a reproduction of the New Testament, for they wanted no corruption or unscriptural practices. They also believed that no man or group of men were wise or good enough to have too much control over others. This was the beginning of our Country's Democratic system.

It is said that in 1715 permission was granted by the Legislature to form a Parish; a subdivision of an area coinciding with an original Ecclesiastical Parish and constituting the unit of local government. This was a primitive organization, separated from the First Society (now Norwich).

1738 Allowed to tax two pence an acre on unimproved land of fellow inhabitants but not on non-residents.

January 3, 1739 New Concord Society was organized for it had a settled minister. Rev. William Throop, a graduate of Yale who was ordained that day. He was to serve for 46 years.

1739 John Birchard freely gives a deed to Samuel Lathrop, Jr., a member of the Meeting House Committee, and New Concord Society, a tract of land four rods square to build their first Meeting House on. "For and in consideration of love and goodwill I have in and do bear towards the Society of New Concord, in Norwich". This property is located on the easterly side of Bozrah Street (Route 163) in the vicinity of Johnson's Oil.

The first meetinghouse was built about 1739-40; prior to that time services were held in homes and frequently colonists went to West Farms, now Franklin.

1741 School Committee chosen to consult what shall be done concerning a school in the Society.

1764 Discussed building a new meetinghouse or enlarging the same.

1770 Voted to give Samuel Gager the Old Meetinghouse. However, it was still standing May 9, 1815.

1770 Simon Gager conveyed one-half acre for a meetinghouse and in 1772 Samuel Gager conveyed a small parcel of land adjacent to the Meeting House lot for travelling purposes.

This meeting house was located on the westerly (opposite) side of the road from the first meeting House and eight rods further south. In this Meeting House the first town meeting would be held.

This is now Gager property.

1773 Grant was given to Mr. Samuel Gager 3 pounds 3 shillings, also 12 shillings, payment in full of said Gager's demands on said Society for building a new Meeting House.

The early meeting houses were plain structures and there was no music, for the psalm books had no musical notes. An elder or deacon would "line out" (read) a line from a psalm and the people would sing it to their own tune. This was called Psalmody. It has been said that it sounded as if there were forty tunes roared at one time.

There were two long sermons with lunch in between each Sunday; so it was little wonder a tytheing man was needed. If one was disorderly or dozed off, he would tap them with his long stick.

Ladies sat on one side of the Church with the children and the men on the other side. Young men and older boys sat together and in some cases in the church balcony if there was one.

Tytheing men were also appointed by Town Government to guard against Sabbath breaking, gaming, tippling and idleness.

At the first town meeting June 20, 1786, Urish Lathrop and Thomas Huntington were elected to this position.

Prior to the Incorporation of the Town the Church was the governing body. One of the qualifications of a voter was that he be a member of the Society. Differences were resolved and those not were petitioned to the Legislature. Records were kept including those of baptism, marriages and deaths; usually giving the causes.

They also saw to the laying out of Society lines, built the churches and satisfied the requirements necessary to become a Town.

May 11, 1786 They were also mindful of conserving natural resources and it is said that some material from the 1st and 2nd Meetinghouses were used in the present Meeting House.

There were two off-shoots of this Congregational Church. The Bozrahville (Gilman) Congregational Church, sometimes called the 2nd Congregational Church was organized February 29, 1828. Services were held over the Bozrahville Mfg. Co. store which stood approximately where the Gilman Post Office now is. This church was very active until business at the mill declined. It was disbanded in 1891.

There was also a Union Congregational Church at Fitchville prior to the Baptist organization in 1887.

William E. Dodge "The Prophet Bozrah" joined the Bozrah Center Church in 1822. He with the aid of local youths and his "potato patch" in Bozrahville aided over three hundred persons into the ministry. He later went to New York where he amassed great wealth and served in Congress. He gave, it is said, \$100,000 a year to charities and missions.

Citizens of New York erected a life-sized statue in memory of him.

The Church raised up two missionaries. One was Jane Lathrop Cherry, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ezra Lathrop, in whose honor

the Church gives a memorial scholarship each year, the other was Rev. Charles A. Gager, a graduate of Yale and Andover Theological Seminary who served as a missionary in Jerusalem. He passed away at the American Embassy in Cairo, Egypt, where he was buried. There is a monument to his memory in the Bozrah Rural Cemetery.

The Women's Missionary of the church was organized in 1869.

January 30, 1840 a meeting was held at the Center School and a committee was chosen to provide a place to hold meetings. The school was used until the present church was dedicated October 25, 1843, at which time Rev. William Birchard was ordained.

The stone work was done by Nathaniel Rudd with granite coming from Elijah Abel from the quarry on Bashon Hill.

Asa Fitch had deeded land to the church and town for this building. He stipulated that the church must keep the walls around it maintained. The basement was the Town Hall until 1947 when the Town gave the church a deed for it's share of the property.

The Society of New Concord and the Town had an indenture drawn up regarding stipulations and the Town paid the Church \$400.00 to complete the agreement.

1845 The old 2nd church land was sold to Noyes Sisson. Also in 1845 we find the formation of a Parsonage Association and land was purchased from Joshua Maples for \$191.25. At least two ministers were known to reside there. It was sold to Rev. Nathan S. Hunt in 1858. It is now the home of Mrs. Ellen Johnson.

1872 Clarissa Haughton deeded a 5 plus acre lot for a parsonage home for the New Concord Ecclesiastical Society. The present parsonage was built on it.

1848 The Church was rededicated as the ladies had done considerable work; painting, papering and put new cushions in all the seats. The stands, chairs and new pulpit donated by Mrs. Hunt, widow of Rev. Nathan Hunt, were also in place.

The Bozrahville Church Choirs rendered efficient help in music.

1912 Alice A. Bishop personally solicited \$609 in subscriptions for a resident minister. She served as organist for 60 years. The present organ was dedicated to her.

1912 The Church was Incorporated.

1939 The Church celebrated it's 200th Anniversary.

1932 The kitchen was installed in the basement with Town approval.

During World War II the Missionary Society rolled bandages, saved fat, recycled Christmas cards and took them to the Norwich Hospital and sent "care packages" to the boys in service. Seven members of the Church served their country: Lloyd T. Abel, Allyn Avery, George K. Brush, II, Robert Chapman, William Congdon, Walter Johnson, Alonzo Pierce and Albert Grandy, Jr.

The Pilgrim Fellowship was organized and has built an outdoor chapel on the hill behind the Church. They are still active, as are the Ladies Aid and Missionary Societies.

The Rev. William Rafuse is currently serving as our thirty-fourth minister.

The Church which donates liberally to Missions, worthy and charitable causes, stands as a memorial to the Colonists and those through the years who have supported it.



FITCHVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Fitchville Union Congregational Church, House of Worship was erected by Asa Fitch and dedicated in 1852. All salaries were paid by him while he lived and a fund was left by him for the support of the church. The Union Congregational Church closed briefly after the Civil War.

This church was first organized as the Fitchville Baptist Church in 1887 under the ministry of Rev. E.J. Bosworth. The two small rooms on either side of the raised pulpit are most interesting. The one to the left as you face the pulpit was Mr. Fitch's private worship cubicle with a window, a fireplace and two doors. One door was to enter from the street side, where his livery boy waited outside during services, and the other door was for him to open for his sole benefit to look up at the presiding minister in his high pulpit, which was characteristic of that period. That way Mr. Fitch did not have to mix with the common folk.

A second distinction is the catacomb which was for Mr. Fitch's family only. It was large enough to hold thirty-six bodies. Twenty-two bodies were laid to rest there but, the stink was so overwhelming on Sunday morning, that the bodies were eventually moved to Johnson Cemetery in the late 1920's.

Rev. Jacob Speerli served as pastor from 1922-1924.

Rev. George Strouse and Rev. William Berriman served as pastors to the Congregational Church and this church at the same time.

The 1938 hurricane shattered the rose and gray stained lead glass windows. A wrought iron fence and the church steeple were also lost at this time.

For the years 1948-1952 a minister was shared with the Leffingwell Baptist. The Rev. Robert Fitzgerald lived in the Leffingwell parsonage which was located near their church.

During Rev. and Mrs. Kenneth Hatch's pastorate (1955-1970) major repairs were made, consisting of aluminum exterior siding, a new lighting system, and a redecorated sanctuary. The Hatches were also responsible for the Christian Education building attached to the rear of the church which was dedicated in 1961.

There is word of Asa Fitch building a parsonage for his church. The earliest knowledge found is Rev. W. D. Hetherington living in what is now the Onsager house in 1922 which is located next to the present day parsonage. Rev. Hetherington served from 1913 to 1922.

In 1971, the church bought the duplex millhouse which ironically had belonged to Asa Fitch back when he owned the town. It is located right behind the church and backs up to the pond. It was purchased for \$12,000.00 and many renovations were needed to convert to one family occupancy. At that time one apartment

rented for \$55 a month. In 1928, the same apartment rented for \$1.00 per week or \$52.00 a year.

Rev. Clifford Olson was pastor from 1975-1981.

Rev. William Paige was pastor from 1981-1983.

Rev. Howard Wood, Jr. substituted until 1984 when Rev. Stephen Weaver became the present pastor, delivering his first sermon on August 26, 1984.



SCOTT HILL BAPTIST CHURCH

In the early 1700's the Irish got permission from the King of England to build a church on Scott Hill. This was on the Bozrah-Lebanon line.

In 1803, when the road was continued to go to Route 2 they turned the Church around to face the new road.

The Church was destroyed by the 1938 hurricane and the land was sold. The money went to the Fitchville Baptist Church.

Mrs. Herbert Lappie and Mrs. Mary Abel were officers and members of the original Church.



FORMER CHURCHES

The Jewish Synagogue was in Bozrahville in an old boarding house which has since burned.

The Gilman Congregational was at a site where the Post Office is now.

LEFFINGWELL BAPTIST CHURCH

The present church history dates back to 1788 when evangelist Reuben Palmer of Montville conducted open air services.

In 1791 plans were made to erect a building to worship in and in 1795 this was completed on the rocky knoll. It was floored with loose boards laid in the earth. The benches were slabs of wood with legs stuck in them, and the pulpit was an old wooden box. The worshipers were known as a branch of the church of Montville. Noteworthy is the fact that this church was the First Baptist Church of Bozrah within a nine mile square, including what is now the City of Norwich.

In 1872 land was given to the church by J.C. Leffingwell and a new building erected and dedicated on Christmas Day, 1873.

In 1873 the Ladies Aid Society was organized. Throughout the years it fulfilled its name and purpose, contributing largely towards the running expense of the church.

In 1905 Deacon J.C. Leffingwell gave land for a parsonage.

The church was legally incorporated as an organized body in 1928.

In 1930 Rev. J. Elder was pastor and the 100th anniversary of the church was celebrated.

It was a sad time in the church in 1943 when Dr. and Mrs. Francis Rose, missionaries from Leffingwell Baptist Church, were killed by a Japanese firing squad and beheaded, while serving the Lord on Panay Island, in the Philippines. A memorial plaque in their honor hangs in the church for these martyred missionaries who gave thirty years of service in His name.

On November 26, 1945, Rev. Robert Fitzgerald was called to our church and in 1947 presented his resignation which the church accepted with regret.

In September, 1947 a student of Barrington College, Robert Dillon, served the church until 1950. Rev. Fitzgerald was recalled to serve and resigned in 1954.

In 1955 Kenneth Hatch was installed as pastor. A plot of land for expansion for educational requirements was purchased, and in 1965 the addition was completed and church alterations were made.

In 1969 Rev. A. R. Christenson was called to the ministry of the church.

In 1975 Peter Tidd was ordained into the ministry. He was a member of this church with a definite commitment to the work of the Lord. The following names are the others either in the ministry or dedicated to missionary work: Ivan Hatch, George Bertram, Richard Price, John Kane, and Keith and Susan Caplet.

In 1978 the old parsonage was sold and a new parsonage was purchased.

Since 1981 Rev. Howard Wood, Jr. has been the pastor.

The 150th anniversary was celebrated the week of October 5, 1981.

1907 CHURCH AND PARSONAGE



PARSONAGE OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, BOZRAH.



1986

THE BOZRAHVILLE CHURCH (ST. MARY'S CHURCH)

Bozrah was well advanced in its first century as a town before Catholics appeared in appreciable numbers. The few who settled here before 1860, Irish immigrants for the most part, travelled for Mass to Norwich and Old St. Mary's parish (now St. Patrick's) if they lived "east" in Fitchville. They travelled to Colchester and the mission church of St. Andrew if they lived in the western section of town, then called Bozrahville and now known as Gilman. When the Colchester mission became a parish in 1860, the pastoral care of all Bozrah Catholics was entrusted to the new parish.

It was the Bozrahville Catholic community, numbering no more than a few dozen in the 1860's which first gained a church of its own, a simple frame structure which they shared with the still fewer Catholics in the near parts of Lebanon. It is curious to note that St. Mary's mission church built in 1868 by Father James McCarten, Colchester's second pastor, was always referred to by him and in the records of the Old Hartford diocese as "the Bozrahville church", even though the building stood (and stands) just over the line in Lebanon.

The little faith-community in Bozrahville got along happily enough for over forty years, but with the closing down of the rubber works which employed so many of its members it suffered sharp decline. St. Mary's mission, the "Bozrahville Church," was discontinued in 1923, the faithful travelling for worship after that year to Fitchville or Colchester. The property was sold in 1936. What remains of the old church can now be seen on the property of William Fish on McGrath Lane, near the old Chestnut Hill Road in Lebanon.



ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

The Fitchville Catholic story is one of steadier and more lasting growth. For a full century after 1860, Fitchville remained under the jurisdiction of the Colchester parish. Clergy from St. Andrew's came out faithfully year after year to offer Sunday Mass, first in homes, later in the hall of Palmer Brothers factory, after 1894 in the well-beloved St. John's mission church which stands today as a sign of an enduring faith. Earliest Catholic families, taken from an early document--Brand, Breen, Brady, Burns, Coughlin, Driscoll, Fields, Foley, Gribbin, Kingberger, Kinkead, Kane, Lynch, McManus, McCarthy, Marra, O'Leary, Popham, Rogers, Sullivan, Sweeney--and more could be listed--have been joined over the years by others of diverse origin and tradition.

Colchester pastors and their assistants, a long list, live in the memories of older members. In the Colchester years a strong spirit of community developed among Fitchville's Catholics, warmed by sociability and even enlivened at times by amateur theatricals, and like diversions such as sports.

Not until early in 1893, during the pastorate of Reverend John Cooney, was the land acquired on which St. John's mission church now stands. No time was lost before construction was undertaken, and on October 1 of the same year a cornerstone was laid for a new church. By the following June, St. John's was ready for dedication. Bishop Tierney came from Hartford for the ceremony which marked the beginning of a new era in the history of Fitchville's Catholics. A historian of the Hartford diocese, writing in the late 1890's, lists the Fitchville Catholics population as then numbering three hundred, one hundred more than the Bozrahville mission's population at that time.

Another notable change for St. John's came in 1960 when the pastoral care of the growing mission was transferred from the Colchester parish to the younger (1902) and nearer one of the Sacred Heart Church in Norwichtown. Reverend Francis Lawlor was pastor in Norwichtown that year and gladly took up his new responsibility. St. John's continued its happy growth. Father Lawlor died in 1971 and was succeeded in 1972 by Monsignor Joseph V. King, diocesan Chancellor that year but willing to be pastor as well. In January, 1986, reaching his 75th birthday Monsignor King retired and the new pastor is Rev. William J. Flynn.

In Bozrah's anniversary year the town's Catholic community, grown from a small nucleus of mostly mid-19th century immigrant families, has a membership of well over 600. Happily united, proud of its history (its claim to being the "oldest mission church in Connecticut" goes unchallenged), St. John's remembers its blessings and shares enthusiastically in the life of the civic community now 200 years old.



FIRST SELECTMEN

It may be of interest to know that a number of these individuals, (at the start of our Town) had held various official positions in the affairs of the Town of Norwich, from which our Town separated. Many of them were veterans of the Revolution and ranged from Privates to Majors, their military rank was often listed, thus in the early years we find an elected group of Town officers that had the experience and knowledge of how to establish a new Town and govern it accordingly. What better background could the Electors of 1786 find in men, to lay the ground work for the foundation of our Town?

John H. Miner held the office of 1st Selectman for 23 terms, from the 7th October, 1889 to the 4th October, 1915, losing only three terms during the above period.

Raymond C. Barber is the 50th, 1st Selectman of the Town of Bozrah having been elected on 6th November, 1979.

The following is a list of the men who have served as 1st Selectman of the Town of Bozrah from 20 June, 1786 to the present:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Major Benjamin Throop | 26. William Hough |
| 2. Capt. Issac Huntington | 27. David H. Waterman |
| 3. Capt. John McCall | 28. Daniel Rudd |
| 4. Nehemiah Waterman, Jr. Esq. | 29. Giles Hershel |
| 5. Capt. Zerubabel Wightman | 30. Andrew J. Hough |
| 6. Oliver Backus | 31. Jedediah S. Hough |
| 7. Capt. Roswell Fox | 32. George Lathrop |
| 8. Major Asa Fitch | 33. N.C. Cook |
| 9. John Hough | 34. William F. Bailey |
| 10. Joshua Stark | 35. John Lathrop |
| 11. Simeon Abell, Jr. | 36. Robert Palmer |
| 12. William Smith | 37. Charles A. Gager |
| 13. Gurdon Gifford | 38. Charles A. Johnson |
| 14. Dyar McCall | 39. E. J. Miner |
| 15. William Crocker | 40. John H. Miner |
| 16. Nehemiah Waterman | 41. Samuel G. Johnson |
| 17. William Whiting | 42. John S. Sullivan |
| 18. William Kelley | 43. E. Leroy Lathrop |
| 19. Ezra Lathrop | 44. Frank L. Lathrop |
| 20. Elijah Huntington | 45. Gustave Lorentz |
| 21. Thomas Baldwin | 46. Lawrence Gilman |
| 22. Daniel Herrick | 47. Stanley A Tinker |
| 23. Brewster Lee | 48. Benjamin F. Stevens |
| 24. Orimel Johnson | 49. Ralph G. Fargo |
| 25. Albert G. Avery | 50. Raymond C. Barber |

TOWN CLERKS & TOWN TREASURERS

From 1786 to 1799, the Town Clerk and Treasurer were separate offices until 1800, when they were combined. This continued to July, 1942. During this period thirteen persons held this dual job.

Mr. Wareham W. Bentley, has the longest continuous record of service as Town Clerk & Treasurer, elected October 1st, 1894, as Town Clerk, he served until the 7th of November, 1916, at which time he was appointed Treasurer as well as Town Clerk.

Mr. Bentley held this dual office till his death on July 9th, 1942, having served a total of 47 terms and 9 months, 25 terms and 8 months as Treasurer, he was also the first man to take the Town Clerks oath of office on the 15th of November 1894 and the last person to hold this dual office. His last recording was 8th July, 1942.

Mrs. Anna Mair is the 27th officer listed as Town Clerk of Bozrah.

Mrs. Claire R. Granger is the 36th officer whose title is Treasurer, Town of Bozrah.



TOWN GARAGE AND DOG POUND

TOWN CLERKS-JUNE 20,1786 TO PRESENT

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Ebenezer Backus | 15. Samuel G. Johnson |
| 2. Capt. Nehemiah Waterman, Jr. | 16. James Bishop |
| 3. Eliphalet Huntington | 17. Chauncey E. Leffingwell |
| 4. Elijah Huntington | 18. Charles A. Gager |
| 5. John Hough | 19. A. D. Herrick |
| 6. Asa Woodworth | 20. Wareham W. Bentley |
| 7. Ebenezer Hough | 21. Edna Proctor |
| 8. Gardner Avery | 22. John K. Proctor |
| 9. William Crocker | 23. George M. Follett |
| 10. John W. Haughton | 24. Annie L. Follett |
| 11. Albert G. Avery | 25. Charlotte A. Lathrop |
| 12. Jehiel Johnson | 26. Margaret Blanch |
| 13. Jehiel Johnson | 27. Anna Mair |
| 14. Isaac Johnson | |

TOWN TREASURERS-June 20, 1786 TO PRESENT

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Capt. Isaac Huntington | 19. Charles A. Johnson |
| 2. Elijah Huntington | 20. Samuel G. Johnson |
| 3. Nehemiah Waterman, Jr. | 21. Dwight Abel |
| 4. John Hough | 22. A. D. Herrick |
| 5. Gardner Avery | 23. Jehiel L. Johnson |
| 6. David A. Fox | 24. Chauncey C. Leffingwell |
| 7. Joshua Maples | 25. S. W. Haughton |
| 8. John W. Haughton | 26. William Kilroy |
| 9. Albert G. Avery | 27. Samuel A. Gager |
| 10. Christopher B. Rogers | 28. Wareham W. Bentley |
| 11. Jehiel Johnson | 29. Mary E. Sweeney |
| 12. Isaac Johnson | 30. Mary A. Chapman |
| 13. William Smith | 31. Elvira S. Marks |
| 14. George Lathrop | 32. Allen R. Brown |
| 15. Simeon Abel | 33. Henry Monell |
| 16. J. S. Hough | 34. Anne Leschinsky |
| 17. Charles A. Gager | 35. Anna Mair |
| 18. Nehemiah C. Cook | 36. Claire R. Granger |

BOZRAH TOWN HALL

This building originally owned by Asa Fitch, was purchased by the Town of Bozrah in 1949.

This two-story stone structure is representative of the buildings Asa Fitch had built between 1832 and 1865 during the period of the development of the mill village of Fitchville.

Before being acquired by the Town of Bozrah, the building served various purposes and has been used as a social hall, and at an earlier time as a sericulture plant.

For many years the middle section of the first floor was used as a firehouse.

The Town Hall is now used for various meetings and houses the offices of the First Selectman, the Town Clerk, the Tax Collector, the Assessors, the Building Inspector and a vault for town records.





FORMER
POST OFFICE

USED TO
TRANSPORT WORKERS
TO MILL AND
OTHER ACTIVITIES



RANDALL PALMER
WITH
NEW CAR

BOZRAH POST OFFICE

The postal records in the National Archives, Washington, D. C. show that the post office in Fitchville, New London County was established as Bozrah. Its exact date of establishment is not given. The records show that it was established shortly before November 23, 1820, which is the date of the first financial return of the first Postmaster to the Postmaster General. The postal records also show that Chandler Woodworth was the only Postmaster appointed at this office before 1832. The post office was renamed Fitchville on January, 1888.

Following are the Postmasters who have served since 1820:

1820 - 1832	Chandler Woodworth
1835	Nehemiah H. Fitch
1841	Stephen Fitch
1852 - 1858	William Fitch
1859 - 1871	John W. Haughton
1873	John R. Comstock
1876	Byron R. Hill
1879	Joseph A. Pierce
1880	George Steele
1901 - 1917	Louis Brand
1918 - 1941	John F. Fields
1942 - 1972	John L. Fields
1973 - Present	Elaine L. Heinrich

The Fitchville Post Office was a fourth class office until 1936. At that time it became a third class office due to mail from Palmer Bros. Mill.

In 1958 it advanced to second class due to Alexander Smith Rug Company and Montgomery Ward.

In October, 1960, the present post office building was dedicated and the post office moved from the Universal Food Store to its present location.

In 1960 the RFD#1 rural route was established which was previously RFD#5 Norwichtown.

On August 3, 1985, RFD#2 rural route was established due to additions to the RFD#1 rural route. On this date all residents who live in the Town of Bozrah were transferred from RFD#2, Norwich to RFD#1, Fitchville. Also added were residents from Colchester who live in the Town of Bozrah.

On January 30th, 1986 the Post Office name was changed back to Bozrah.

POST OFFICE LOCATED IN RIGHT HAND CORNER FOR MANY YEARS



GILMAN POST OFFICE

A post office called Bozrahville was established here on April 16, 1834. An early mail route, including this village, was # 686 from Norwich to East Haddam via Bozrah. On April 20, 1841, this route was let to Veron Stiles. It was thirty-one miles round trip, three times a week in two-horsed coaches for \$500 per annum.

The name was changed to its present form in 1932. Nathan Gilman began manufacturing shoddy here in 1907. The name honors him.

A new United States Post Office at Gilman, Connecticut 06336 was built in 1960 and dedicated on October 15th of the same year.

The following is the list of Postmasters and the date each was appointed:

Postmaster	Date Appointed
Havelah Mowry - - - - -	April 16, 1834
Sylvester K. Andrew - - - - -	March 8, 1845
James M. Peckham - - - - -	February 14, 1849
Francis T. Draper - - - - -	May 11, 1857
Andrew Waterman - - - - -	April 24, 1865
James M. Peckham - - - - -	May 19, 1869
Franklin W. Bogue - - - - -	September 21, 1885
James M. Peckham - - - - -	May 23, 1889
Willam E. Manning - - - - -	October 23, 1890
Alonzo A. Smith - - - - -	March 23, 1900
Nathan Gilman - - - - -	March 29, 1911
Evelyn C. Beswick - - - - -	February 28, 1949
Martin J. Gilman - - - - -	April 1, 1953
Shirley J. Gilman - - - - -	March 24, 1979



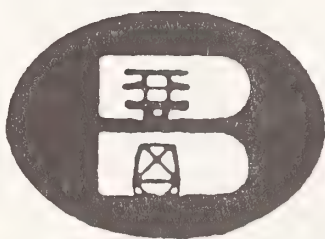
A Proud Heritage...

...A Promising Future

Bozrah and BL&P--partners in progress for more than 60 years. It's an enviable association, one well-documented as having been, mutually-beneficial to the Town, its genteel residents, and us.

It has fostered steady, sensible growth. And it bodes well for tomorrow's energy needs.

We congratulate Bozrah on it's 200th anniversary. Like you, we're proud of our Town. And, like you, we look forward to many more fruitful years together as partners in progress.



Bozrah Light & Power Co.

Partners in Progress

SINCE 1921

UNIVERSAL FOOD STORE

10 Main Street
Fitchville, CT 06334
889-8578

*Happy 200th
Birthday Bozrah*

“Known for Fine Quality and Personal Service”
Still Providing the Finest in:

Steaks

Ground Beef

Deli Meats

Pork

PLUS

Hot Coffee

Fresh Pastry

Grinders

Cold Beer and Soda

Soups

Chili

Lottery

Remember our sincere belief:

“If We Can Do Anything To Serve You Better, -
Let Us Know And We Will Do Our Very Best To Serve You.”

Lori and Walt

Happy Birthday
Bozrah
George & Betty Johnson

ODETAH CAMPGROUND

R.F.D. #2 - Route 163
Bozrah, CT 06334

Telephone (203) 889-4144
National Toll-Free Reservation No.
(800) 622-CAMP

Open April 15 — October 15

Compliments of
Martin and Betty Rogan

Happy 200th Birthday
Bozrah, CT

*Compliments
of*
**Arney, Eileen
Marcy and Dana
Kaplan**

**IKE
GEJDENSON**

Ralph
Jane
Jillian

Dan
Amy
Tara

**THE BANNING'S
Ralph & Dot**

Dave
Sally

Ev
Bill
Elizabeth
(Brown)

Bob
Russ



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*Lawn Construction, Planting,
Asphalt Paving, Oiling*

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Bozrah, CT 06334

889-4167

Compliments of
**Bozrah Recreation
Commission**

"Nice Place To Live"
**Tim C. Parker
Gifford Lane**

Compliments of
**Steven Coit,
Excavating**

Hough Road, R.F.D. #2
Bozrah, CT 06334

Phone 889-2738

Helene L. Bloom
Attorney At Law
Box 272 - Lake Road
Bozrah, Connecticut 06334
859-0852

In Memory of
Harry Grandy

**P&D Enterprises extends our best wishes to the
Town of Bozrah on its Bicentennial Birthday.**

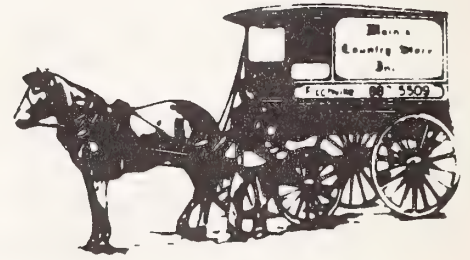
**Throughout the year, we should all stop to
remember our heritage, family and friends, and
look to the future as to what we can do to keep
Bozrah a great place to live.**

**P&D Enterprises hopes that our small contribution
to the restoration of two significant Historic
structures, Millpond Apartments and The Fitch
House, are preserved for our childrens' children
to be remembered as an event that enhanced the
center of Fitchville.**

HAPPY BIRTHDAY BOZRAH

DARWIN C. GEBBIE

Open 7 Days, 7 a.m.-9 p.m.
(203) 887-5509



Main's Country Store

*Lotto - Groceries - Deli - Grinders
Beer - Coffee - Donuts - Gas*

Blue Seal Feeds

Tom - Carol - Tom, Jr.
Tim - Tracy & Tricia

Old Route 2, (Off Exit 23)
Fitchville, CT 06334

FITCHVILLE SCHOOL



LEFFINGWELL SCHOOL

EDUCATION

Among the early Bozrah settlers, love of education stood next to their love of religion. Records of Bozrah School meetings as far back as 1796 are preserved. The first meeting recorded was held in the meeting house of the New Concord Society October 24, 1796. A moderator and clerk were chosen, and a school committee of three members was elected for one year. After appointing Messrs. Elias West, Zerubabel Wightman and Asa Fitch, "to confer with the ancient town of Norwich about our part of the old school money in their hands", the meeting adjourned for one week. At a later meeting, we find another vote to recover this money but no record of its ever being received. Little is recorded of these early meetings except the election of officers, and while we know the first public school was established at the site of the present Bozrah Center School, we do not know the exact date of the opening session. At a school meeting held October 30, 1799, a committee of nine was appointed to divide the School Society into districts. The following April, the committee submitted a report of its work which was accepted. At this meeting reference was made to the Leffingwell District showing that it had been set off previously. Several petitions are recorded of people who wished to be set off to a different district, and when a transfer was made it always states "and draw his public money accordingly." This had reference to the state money which had been received for several years. These transfers seem to have been the cause of much discussion at these meetings.

Until 1909 at the town meeting, a hiring committee consisting of three members was appointed each year and before this committee the candidates for teaching positions appeared to be examined. The examination was oral and sometimes lasted almost entirely through the day. If judged by the committee to be eligible to teach, the applicant received a teaching certificate for a year which might be revoked by the hiring committee if deemed expedient. Each district had its treasurer secretary and hiring "committee-man" who engaged the teacher for that district subject to the approval of the town committee. Each school was visited twice each term, sometimes by the three members of the town committee and the district "committee-man", and sometimes by one member of the town board of education. Usually on these "inspection" days, the pupils were given oral test questions and examples at the board. Later, they listened to "remarks" by one of the visitors which aimed to inspire the pupils with zest to acquire all the necessary school virtues.

In the earliest part of the town history, school was in session for only two or three months each year. Later we find the school year divided into two terms, a summer and a winter term. The summer term lasted from May to November. During this term,

the school was taught by a woman and the girls and very small boys attended, the older boys being employed on farms. The winter term lasted from November until April when the older pupils attended school until they were eighteen or twenty years of age. During the winter term, the school was in the charge of a "master" because a disciplinarian of strength was required to keep order when the older pupils took their places for the winter's schooling.

At first, as was the custom everywhere in New England, reading, writing, arithmetic and spelling were the only subjects taught. Pupils wrote in those days with quill pens. The copy which they practiced during the writing period was "set" by the teacher and was usually a common maxim as "A stitch in time saves nine" and was written repeatedly while the writing lesson lasted. To be a good speller was considered a great accomplishment and spelling matches were often held in the schools. There was also much competition between the pupils of the different districts for spelling honors and inter-district evening spelling matches were held at intervals during the winter when the parents and friends assembled to witness the defeat or success of the district each favored. Schools were in session during these early days from 9 o'clock in the morning until 4 o'clock in the afternoon with an hour's intermission for dinner. A resident of Bozrah who attended school here sixty years ago gives the order of exercise for a school day as follows: 1) Testament reading (Each pupil had a testament and in turn read a verse from some chapter designated by the teacher.) 2) Geography 3) Arithmetic 4) Writing 5) Reading from a reading book 6) Grammar 7) History 8) Spelling.

The teachers wage in those days was about one dollar and a half a week and board. The teacher was boarded free by the parents of the children whom she taught. The time spent in each home was in proportion to the number of children attending school. About 1856, we are told teachers were receiving about two dollars and a half per week with board.

The first school houses were small and each built with a fire place. Fuel was supplied by the parents sending children to school; a certain amount being required for each child. There were no individual seats or desks in the first school houses, but long shelves extended along three sides of the room a convenient distance from the floor to serve as desks. The pupils sat on the long benches with their backs to the teacher. When they recited, they swung about and faced the pedagogue. Small libraries were purchased by most of the schools in the early days, but the Latin grammars and similar books found in these old collections would be considered of little literary value today.

A woman teacher who taught in one of Bozrah's early schoolhouses of the 1900's remembered that usually once a day,

two boys were sent across the road to a well to draw two buckets of water for the day. There was a dipper for each bucket and everyone used the same dipper. The teacher said that she introduced a third bucket for students to put back the water they hadn't swallowed. It wasn't easy, she said, to break the pupils of their old habit of putting what they didn't swallow back into the regular water buckets.

She said that she was always afraid of the official School Visitors and dreaded their visits. When asked what qualifications were necessary for men who were appointed as School Visitors, she answered that since they had to be above average to evaluate the teacher and her program, it was necessary that they be able to read a little.

One School Visitor occasionally picked up cattle droppings from the pasture behind the school for his garden, and on his way into the school, he would place the full pail by the open schoolroom door. This habit caused some excitement among the pupils, but it didn't brighten the teacher's day at all. Sometimes he would sit down in the back of the classroom to observe and fall asleep. When awakened, he might deliver a brief sermon on the rewards of industriousness and the unhappy fate of the slothful, pick up his pail, and disappear until the time for the next visit to the school.

At a meeting held October 8, 1909, it was voted to place the seven school districts into which the town had been divided late in the eighteenth century, under town management thereby abolishing district school officers and placing the schools under the direct management of a town board of education consisting of three members to be elected or re-elected yearly.

THE SEVEN SCHOOLS AND LOCATIONS TAKEN FROM MAP OF 1868

District

- # 1 Bozrah Center School - Corner of Hough Road and Route 163
- 2 Rudd School - Scott Hill - Present Bozrah Grange
- 3 Johnson School - Corner of Bashon Hill and Route 2
- 4 Hammond School - South Road - Damaged by fire
- 5 Bozrahville School - In Gilman
- 6 Fitchville Primary and
Fitchville Grammer School - Present Location
- 7 Leffingwell School - Corner of Noble Hill and Route 82

In 1905 districts 4 and 6 were combined and no further mention was made of number four.

Another important change was made in the town school system when at a town meeting held in October 1912 it was voted to place

the town schools under state supervision. Under this arrangement the state sends to the town each year, at the expense of the state, a supervisor who directs the work done in the schools outlining a specific amount to be taught in each subject for each of the eight grades children must pass through before being admitted to a higher course of training. Mr. L.T. Garrison of Willimantic was appointed supervisor of schools in Bozrah by the state board of education soon after this October meeting and made his first official visit in the town December 3, 1912. Under his efficient guidance marked progress was noted along educational lines.

Some money is expended by the town each year in improving the school buildings and at present most of the school is in excellent condition. In 1905, under the direction of the late William Henry Palmer who was a member of the state board of education and who took a deep interest in educational matters, the stone school house at Fitchville was enlarged and made into a two room building. A little later modern improvements and school accessories were added making this one of the best equipped country school houses in the state. The entire cost of the work was borne by the Palmer Brothers who operated the quilt mill at Fitchville.

Each year the town appropriated five dollars for each school to be used with the state appropriation of the same amount for the purchase of library books. Besides fitting each school with a library, the town had purchased at the time of writing ninety-eight sets of books of informational and entertaining reading material by the best writers which are exchanged among the schools. The value of placing such an amount of good literature in the hands of the children cannot be over estimated.

The good standing of the schools in Bozrah was largely due to the efforts of Mrs. Frank Palmer who came to the town with a wide knowledge of school work and who after her election to the school board in 1910 was actively engaged in bettering school conditions.

Printed in the annual town report for 1913 was the first report from a state supervisor to the people of Bozrah. In his first yearly report, Mr. Garrison was concerned with and complained of poor attendance. (86.4%)

"Better attendance means more money from the state, and more progress for your boys and girls. As patriotic, law abiding citizens, as parents with a duty toward the children and toward society to perform, you cannot afford to do otherwise than send your children to school every session when they are able."

This year marked a coordinated course of study among the six town schools.

A Mr. Young was State Supervisor for one year, and he was followed in 1918 by Mr. Fred W. Shearer. In his summary of Bozrah's educational system under his guidance, Mr. Shearer praised the schools for the "war work" that they had done, said that sewing and drawing were being taught in all schools, discussed a partial consolidation plan which involved closing the Rudd School and transporting the children from Rudd to Center School for grades one through five and to Fitchville School for grades six through eight, and commented on the teacher shortage which existed in Bozrah.

Teachers were earning about \$13.00 a week at this time in Bozrah.

In 1919, Connecticut legislators passed a new law which required that a town not providing free supplies and textbooks must at least sell them to the pupils at cost.

Mrs. Mary E. Sweeney became Bozrah's first Principal in 1922. She was principal at the two room Fitchville School.

Until 1924, some Bozrah teachers held only town issued teaching certificates. The 1924 town report indicated that for the first time all teachers in the Town of Bozrah held teaching certificates from the State of Connecticut. In 1926, a new schoolhouse was built in the Rudd District, the Leffingwell School was remodeled and the Fitchville School was equipped with individual pupil desks. The state provided a teacher of physical education for the town schools.

The Johnson School was closed in 1929 because of the small enrollment there. Pupils in the other schools were still providing their textbooks and supplies.

The following year, 1930, the Town of Bozrah provided supplies and textbooks free for all pupils.

In September of 1935, diagnostic tests showed that 71% of the pupils in the town schools were still reading below grade level.

In 1935 Mr. Stanley, a State Supervisor, recommended that the Board of Education build a four room addition to the two room Fitchville School and take advantage of a federal grant of 45% of construction costs and a federal loan of 55%. There was discussion but no action until 1938, when the Board of Education recommended a four room addition to the Fitchville School. Upon completion, the remodeled building would consist of five classrooms; a room to be used as a library, health room, teachers room, office, conference, more adequate toilet facilities, and a large play facility.

On June 22, 1938, a town meeting resolved "that the town of Bozrah appropriate the sum of \$25,000.00 for the construction and expenses of an addition to the public school building at Fitchville and for remodeling of such building".

Construction on the addition to the Fitchville School wasn't begun until 1941. The many changes to be brought about by the consolidation of all the schools into one, a teacher salary schedule which was under discussion, and the cost to the town of both caused much controversy in the town.

In 1942, the remodeled Fitchville School was opened in March, and Center School and Rudd School were closed. The Bozrahville School had been closed at the beginning of the year, and the Leffingwell School was closed at the end of the year.

John F. Fields, member of the Board of Education since 1910, Chairman of the Board of Education since 1911, and member of the Connecticut State Legislature from 1910-1914, died in 1942. The new school was named the John F. Fields Memorial School.

The year 1943 was the first full year of the new school's use. The first teaching staff in the new building was: Mary Sweeney, Grades 7 & 8; Winifred W. Crepeau, Grades 5 & 6; Ida P. Mindel, Grades 3 & 4; and Catherine W. Fields, Grades 1, 2 & 3.

Members of the first class to graduate from the new school were Margaret Gribbin, Ida Homiski, Audrey Lathrop and Betty Jean Lathrop.

A special town meeting was held on October 21, 1954 to:

1. Receive and act upon the report of the School Building Committee relative to an addition.

A new four room addition was begun in 1956.

The fourth addition to the Fields Memorial School, a very controversial addition, was made in 1959. Additional land was needed and later purchased. Classrooms and a gym were added.

A morning and afternoon kindergarten session was begun in 1962. Mrs. Sue Collett was the teacher in Bozrah's first kindergarten.

By 1963 there were fourteen teachers on the staff of the school and the student enrollment was just under four hundred.

In 1968 the last class addition was started. A large science room and three classrooms were built.

In 1971, four hundred forty-three pupils were enrolled in eighteen classrooms. It is currently at two hundred twenty-eight with fourteen classes and teachers.

A library addition was built in 1974 and in 1983 handicapped ramps and code requirements were put in.

Mildred Maples of Hamilton Ave., Norwich, is the oldest past teacher of the Bozrahville and Rudd School. She will be ninety-three years old in May, 1986.





SCHOOL WITH
FIRST ADDITION

BOZRAH SCHOOL SONG

I AM PROUD OF BOZRAH,
IS BOZRAH PROUD OF ME?
WHAT SHE NEEDS IS CITIZENS,
TRAINED IN LOYALTY!
WHEN WE WORK, WHEN WE PLAY
WITH OUR FELLOW MEN,
GOOD CITIZENS WE WILL BE.
BE PROUD, BE PROUD, BE PROUD
OF OUR TOWN AND I'LL MAKE HER
PROUD OF ME.

A SONG SUNG
IN THE
ONE ROOM
SCHOOLHOUSES



BOZRAH CENTER SCHOOL

BOZRAH VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY

The Bozrah Volunteer Fire Company was founded in 1950 and has served since then as the sole provider of firefighting service to the Town of Bozrah.

In 1974 this role was expanded to include Emergency Medical Services. The Bozrah Volunteer Fire Co. now provides all fire, rescue, ambulance and Emergency Medical Services to the Town of Bozrah.

The firehouse is located on SR 608 in the Fitchville section of town. The firehouse is a three bay, two story building which is owned by the Fire Co. and houses the following emergency equipment: 1966 four wheel drive International Pick-up Brush Truck, 1985 Ford F-350 Ambulance, 1965 Ford F-900, 750 gallon, front mounted pump with 1,000 gallons of water, 1978 Mack 1,000 gallon front mounted pump with 1,500 gallons of water. All equipment, insurances, heat and lights are paid for by the Town of Bozrah.

We have searched our records and decided to include the following incidents from our first thirty-five years.

May 10, 1950 - Forty-five persons attended an organizational meeting called by First Selectman, Lawrence Gilman, for the formation of the Bozrah Volunteer Fire Company. There were seventy-one charter members. The first Chief was John Lynch. A 750-1,000 gallon Mack pumper was purchased from Rye, New York for \$426. This was to be housed in the Town Hall.

May, 1951 - Company became official and was incorporated.

August, 1953 - It was decided to purchase service from the Yantic Fire Engine Co. for \$100 per year until a new truck was purchased as the present Mack was unreliable. This Mack was sold in March, 1954 for \$200.

May, 1954 - A new Chevrolet truck was purchased and delivered for \$15,000. It had a 500 gallon per minute pump, 500 gallons of water, and was made by American LaFrance.

April, 1955 - Groundbreaking ceremonies were held for the construction of a new firehouse. The land being donated by Nathan Hantman.

August, 1955 - An International tank truck with a 500 gallon pump and 750 gallon booster tank was purchased for \$1,000.

September, 1955 - Ladies Auxiliary formed.

In 1956 the firehouse was built with cement blocks purchased with money solicited from residents of the town.

August, 1961 - Seymour Adelman, Nathan Hantman and Lawrence Gilman were voted in as Life Members of the department.

October, 1961 - The first Halloween party for the kids of the town held.

June, 1962 - Robert Brown made an Honorary Member.

September, 1965 - International Tank Truck retired.

December, 1965 - Ford Tank Truck with 750 gallon pump and 1,000 gallons of water purchased.

February, 1968 - Prospect Home burned.

August, 1968 - Junior Cadets formed officially with Clarence Fries and Dave Mathewson as advisors.

March, 1969 - A new engine was purchased for the Chevrolet truck.

August, 1969 - First ladies water battle team formed.

August, 1969 - Wirthmore Grain Co. stockhouse fire.

March, 1970 - 1st fashion show held as a fund raiser.

September, 1970 - First Tone Alert receiver put in use.

February, 1971 - Second Fashion Show held.

April, 1971 - Voted to sponsor Boy Scouts.

August, 1971 - Fire in storage shed along Stockhouse Rd.; 2nd mill fire.

December, 1971 - Dave Mathewson voted in as a Life Member.

May, 1972 - Fire at large stockhouse.

June, 1972 - First Beer Fest held to raise money.

July, 1972 - Fire at Palmer Bros. main mill.

May, 1973 - First Emergency Medical Technicians graduated, Ralph Banning, James Banning and Raymond Barber.

October, 1973 - First Fire Prevention Program held at the Fields Memorial School.

June, 1974 - Land deeded to fire company from Lawrence Gilman to be used for a parking lot.

September, 1974 - Proposal for addition.

June, 1975 - 1974 Chevrolet Modular Ambulance purchased and delivered.

July, 1975 - Work on upstairs addition continues.

August, 1975 - Many man hours spent in cooling off Kofkoff chicken coops because of extreme high temperatures.

November, 1975 - Charles Gilman made Life member.

December, 1975 - 25th Anniversary celebration held.

October, 1976 - Joined Colchester Emergency Communications Dispatch Center.

January, 1977 - First New Years party in newly completed upstairs addition.

December, 1977 - Installed gas pumps.

April, 1978 - 911 service implemented.

September, 1978 - Mack 1,000 gal. front mounted pump with 1,500 gallons of water put into service. Cost \$65,000.

November, 1978 - Medical frequency installed in ambulance.

January, 1980 - Mortgage on addition burned.

September, 1980 - Twenty-fifth anniversary celebration held by Ladies Auxiliary.

January, 1981 - Raymond Barber voted in as a Life Member.

March, 1982 - First fatal fire in town since Fire Co. was organized; Mrs. Theresa Slowinski.

May, 1982 - Two air-conditioner units installed in hall.

April, 1982 - Marty Gilman business gutted by fire.

July, 1982 - Brush truck put into service.

November, 1982 - Installation of three insulated doors for front of firehouse. One purchased by auxiliary.

December, 1983 - First female firefighter, Andrea Adelman, accepted.

April, 1984 - First truck raffle held as a fund raiser.

March, 1985 - Second truck raffle started.

September, 1985 - Purchased land from Nathan Hantman for another addition.

November, 1985 - 1985 Ford F-350 Modular Walk-thru ambulance put into service.

The Chief is in charge of all men and equipment in any emergency. The following men have served in this capacity:

May, 1950 - February, 1953	- - - - -	JOHN LYNCH
March, 1953	- - - - -	DAVE MATHEWSON
April, 1953 - June, 1953	- - - - -	JOHN FIELDS
July, 1953 - December, 1954	- - - - -	RAYMOND PERKINS
January, 1955 - October, 1957	- - - - -	JOHN BESWICK
November, 1957 - December, 1962	- - - - -	DAVE MATHEWSON
January, 1963 - December, 1967	- - - - -	RALPH BANNING
January, 1968 - December, 1979	- - - - -	RAYMOND BARBER
January, 1980 - September, 1980	- - - - -	THOMAS O'BRIEN
October, 1980 - Present	- - - - -	DONALD CASAVANT

The President of the Fire Co. presides at all meetings, appoints, committees, and co-ordinates fund raising activities. The following men have served in this capacity:

LAWRENCE GILMAN	JOHN BLANCH
RAYMOND PERKINS	CHESTER HEINRICH
JOHN BESWICK	FRANK CHOJNICKI
JOHN FIELDS	BENJAMIN STEVENS
HAROLD MARKS	JAMES BANNING
WILLIAM FISHBONE	ROSAIRE BROCHU
WILLIAM KANE	THOMAS O'BRIEN
BERNARD LENEHAN	BURTON AVERY
ALFRED HOMISKI	ELLIOTT GELIGOFF
ELI JENNES	EDWARD ODDIE
IRA AVERY	WALTER OKONEY
RAYMOND BARBER	GEORGE K. BRUSH, III
CLARENCE FRIES	

BOZRAH VOLUNTEER FIRE CADETS

The Bozrah Volunteer Fire Cadets is a system to train 13-18 year olds in fire fighting techniques. At age 18, they may become regular fire department members, and by that time they will be well prepared fire fighters.

The Bozrah Volunteer Fire Cadets were organized in 1968. At that time, the people of the fire department felt there was a need for a system to produce new members who were trained and interested enough to stay with the department. There were only a few other companies in the area with working cadet systems, from whom the idea came. Some of the original organizers included Raymond Barber, Clarence Fries, and Dave Mathewson. They and several others started working with the program to get it off the ground. At its time of origin, the Bozrah Junior Fire Cadets, as it was then called, had six members. The system had its ups and downs, but is now at its strongest ever, with over twenty cadets. Many of these young men and women are not only active in fire fighting, but are also medically trained.

The Cadets responded to one hundred sixty-one of the one hundred eighty-four calls in the 1984-85 year, averaging about six cadets per call. The Cadets hold their own meetings and drills once a month, and run their own fundraisers separate from the Fire Department. The cadet program has produced many dedicated and hard working members ready to join the fire department with their advanced training. Some graduated members are currently officers in the Bozrah Volunteer Fire Company.



BOZRAH VOLUNTEER FIRE CO.
LADIES AUXILIARY

The Ladies Auxiliary was formed on September 15, 1955. The first meeting was held at the Bozrah Town Hall. At this time nominations were made to elect officers and set up by-laws. The first official meeting was held on September 27, 1955. The first officers were President: Genevieve Fries, Vice-President: Margaret Bedat, Recording Secretary: Eleanor Foley, Corresponding Secretary: Elizabeth Woodworth, and Treasurer: Dorothy Banning.

In the past thirty years members have participated in such community programs as: mass feeding, assisting the nursing service, Jimmy Fund, Bloodmobile, first aid courses, Christmas food baskets, Memorial Day parade refreshments and the Christmas Tree lighting ceremony refreshments. Money raising projects have included chicken barbecues, food sales, cookbook sales, suppers, Christmas bazaars, yard sales, dances, fashion shows, sale of candy, vanilla, floorwax, knives, and writing paper and cards. Since the completion of the Firehouse Hall we have been catering for affairs held there.

The Auxiliary has responded to many "86" calls for fires and we are remembered for our early (chicken mill fire) breakfasts. The first emergency call was a flood in 1955.

Moneys raised have been used to purchase kitchen equipment and appliances. Also fire equipment for fire police and overhead doors. Air conditioners were purchased for the hall.

In October 1976 the Auxiliary opened membership to all interested persons. The only prerequisite is to be sixteen years or older.

The Auxiliary celebrated it's 25th anniversary on September 27, 1980 with a dinner-dance.

The 30th anniversary was celebrated at the September, 1985 meeting. Three members were noted to have been active for all thirty years; Margaret Mathewson, Dorothy Banning and Theresa Kane. Two members who had rejoined but were members at the beginning, Doris Grandy and Margaret Hantman were also honored.

CHARTER MEMBERS

BANNING, DORIS
BANNING, DOROTHY
BEDAT, MARGARET
BESWICK, EVELYN
ELTON, CATHERINE
FISH, HELEN
FOLEY, ELEANOR
FRIES, GENEVIEVE
GILMAN, EDNA
GILMAN, CLARA
GOULART, ANNA
GOULART, EMILIE
GRANDY, DORIS

GURAL, NELLIE
HANTMAN, MARGARET
HEINRICH, ELAINE
KANE, THERESA
LADD, LOUISE
LENEHAN, HANNAH
MARKS, ELVIRAH
MATHEWSON, MARGARET
ORR, BETTY
PERKINS, RUTH
PERRONE, MARTHA
SCHATZ, ESTHER
SMITH, MARGUERITE
WOODWORTH, ELIZABETH

BOZRAH GRANGE #161 PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

Bozrah Grange, a Subordinate Grange, was organized June 2, 1904. Mr. and Mrs. John Stanton were instrumental in its organization.

The first Master was E. Judson Miner, who held that office for five years. He lived on the farm where Camp Odetah now is. In 1912 State Deputy Crouch inspected the Grange and found it second to none in this State.

In 1913 the Grange instructed Edwin E. Lathrop to see that lamps were properly placed on the lawn in front of the Town Hall for the benefit of the Grange and also that the Grange care for the lamps properly during the weekday evenings and on Sunday nights when services are held in the church. Meetings were held in the Town Hall, then the basement of the Bozrah Center Congregational Church. In 1942, following the consolidation of schools in Town, the Rudd District school house was acquired. This is their present home. The mortgage was burned in 1944.

The first Grange Fair was held at the Town Hall on September 20th, 1945.

Many Granges, such as Bozrah, are at a low peak due to the misconception that the Grange is for farmers. Actually its purpose is to serve the total interest of the rural community and the nation. It is a social and educational non-partisan organization but encourages public participation in government at all levels.



BOZRAH MEMORIAL VFW, POST #10759

The first notice of the formation of a Bozrah VFW was circulated to town residents on July 3, 1984. The first meeting of interested residents was on July 17th at the Bozrah Fire House, and on August 14th the requirement of twenty-five new members was reached. The post was installed on October 21, 1984, as the Bozrah Memorial VFW, voted at an earlier meeting to be in memory of all veterans, living or deceased. An official citation from the State of Connecticut General Assembly was received at the installation, commending the Bozrah VFW for formation of their new post. The membership as of January 2, 1986 stands at thirty-six members.

Charter Officers are:

Commander	- - - - -	Edward C. Oddie
Sr. Vice Commander	- - - - -	Clarence H. Fries
Jr. Vice Commander	- - - - -	Donald H. Casavant
Quartermaster	- - - - -	John J. Foley
Post Advocate	- - - - -	Roderick W. Ewen
Trustees	- - - - -	Normand F. Driscoll
	- - - - -	Leonard J. Woodworth
	- - - - -	Frederick W. Altvater, Jr.
Chaplain	- - - - -	Joseph D. Johnson
Surgeon	- - - - -	Sheldon A. Davis
Service Officer	- - - - -	Normand F. Driscoll
Guard	- - - - -	Leonard J. Woodworth
Historian	- - - - -	Edward C. Oddie

Other Charter Members are:

Halstead B. Ayrton, Jr.	Richard W. Haggan
Cornelius W. Banta	Raymond Haywood, Jr.
John R. Blanch	Irving Heifetz
Larry G. Carver	Frank C. Januszewski
James P. Cheverie	Dale R. Jewett
Jack Cipriano	Edward P. Leavitt
Samuel Derrera	Theodore J. Mercik
Stephen J. Frazier	Benjamin A. Piacenza
James R. Gann	Paul E. Shelley
Phil Gaucher, Jr.	William R. Tedeschi
Leonard J. Gillespie	George O. Warner

Bozrah VFW Post #10759 meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Bozrah Senior Center on Route #163, the Bozrah Recreation Field.

BOZRAH PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

During the 1960's the Bozrah Recreation Committee was formed. Walter Brown was chairman and the committee was very active; they earned their own funds. Many classes of interest were held; chess, typing, knitting, rug hooking and Spanish was taught. Every year William Stockdale would show his travelogues.

At a town meeting on March 15, 1965, First Selectman, Benjamin Stevens was authorized to purchase, under the Open Space Program, land on Route 163 known as the Adelman Field, for a price not to exceed \$6,000.

On November 15, 1972, at a special town meeting, Raymond Lemaire made a motion creating a Parks and Recreation Commission. He pointed out that with the help of the whole town more could be done for the young people and with a commission Federal and State Government funds could be secured. The first meeting of the newly formed commission was held on February 28, 1973, at the Town Hall, with Raymond Lemaire as chairman until 1977.

The commission was inactive from 1977 until 1979 and on May 15th, 1979, the first meeting of the reformed commission was held with Charles Long as chairman. This commission has been very active with soccer, baseball, softball, volleyball, basketball, roller skating parties, aerobics and trips to the ice shows and circus.

The main priority of the commission is to provide the types of recreational facilities and programs that the towns people support.

Activities being considered include tennis and basketball courts, a walking-jogging trail, ice skating, resumption of gymnastics, a summer recreation program for children and renovation of the ball fields.



HISTORY OF THE BOZRAH SENIOR CITIZENS GROUP

The Bozrah Senior Citizens group, probably the youngest organization in the Town of Bozrah, yet its membership at the present time includes a number of the Town's oldest residents.

This group organized by Linda Adelman in the early 1970's held their first meeting, by the courtesy of the Trustees of the Bozrah Center Congregational Church, in the basement of the church on Bozrah Street or Route 163, every Tuesday at 2 p.m.

Its purpose at that time and even to the present day is to interest our members in creating and working on various community projects and encouraging sociability.

Throughout the years we worked on repairing school books, chair caning, knitting mittens and hats for the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, making lap robes, holding tag and bake sales to raise funds so as to continue our projects, as we were not funded by the town.

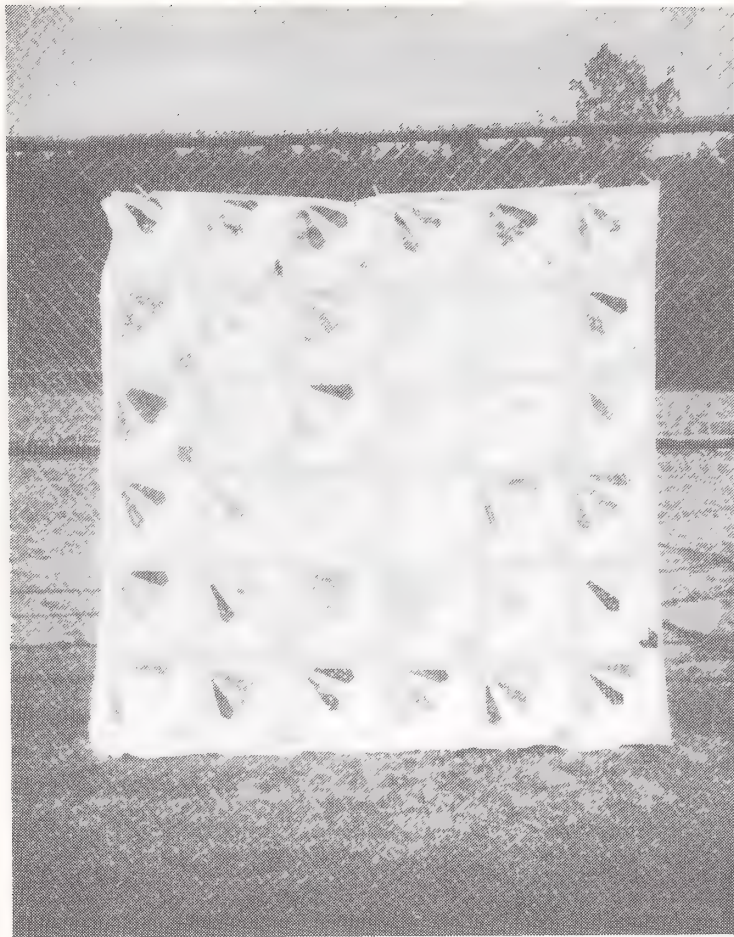
Unfortunately, we kept no official records of our early events and have to rely on memories. The first officers were Dorothy Perkins, President, the late Agnes Brush, Secretary, and the late Samuel Bloom, Treasurer. It was these officers who started us on the path we follow today. We will never forget Samuel Bloom. As treasurer he kept our pennies in a coffee can and at meetings he'd shake the can to let us know there was room for one more quarter. Our dues were 25 cents a meeting.

A lunch program was organized and we were invited to eat at the former Maple Shade Restaurant in Yantic. Later on a nutritional program was started and is still going strong. Bozrah Seniors (those that are interested) meet each Tuesday to enjoy a lunch along with the Franklin Seniors and others at the Franklin Town Hall.

March 7, 1975 representatives from Bozrah, Franklin, Salem and Lebanon met to form and establish an association to be known as 50 Plus. This name was changed on February 13, 1980 to 60 Plus, with the purposes to work collectively for the betterment of the interest of the individual towns, primarily transportation, each town to have two representatives. The first two from our group at this March 7th meeting were Mary Fargo and the late Mabel Fargo.

October 15, 1975 a Town meeting was held and the following approved: Sam Gejdenson resolved and Theodore Viadella seconded that the 50 Plus Association is hereby appointed as the Town of Bozrah's agent in obtaining transportation for the Senior Citizens of the Town etc. The local representative is Linda Adelman, unanimously approved.

The 60 Plus Association is very active and we, along with Seniors from Franklin, Salem and Lebanon, will soon be



enjoying our third bus for transportation on certain days to the lunch program at Franklin, our new center on Route 163, shopping trips and visits to the doctors, etc.

Bozrah Seniors (as well as Franklin, Salem and Lebanon) are required to put on two luncheons and card parties a year to help support the bus. Each town also contributes a fixed amount of money. The planning, etc. for these luncheons is quite a project for our group to be involved in. They are held at the Bozrah Vol. Fire Co. building for we are not equipped to accommodate seventy to eighty people.

We were like a band of gypsies. On leaving the church basement our next meeting place for a short time was at the Moose Home, then the former nurses room at the Town Hall became available but we soon outgrew that. Through the courtesy of the Bozrah Vol. Fire Co. we ended up at the firehouse, the group meeting here for several years.

In the first part of 1983, Mr. Raymond Barber, our 1st Selectman, suggested applying for a state grant to build an addition onto the Town owned Recreation Building on Route 163, to be used as a Senior/Community Center. Application was made, on September 23, 1983 our request for funding was approved, on October 7th ground breaking exercises took place and on May 7th excavation for the foundation was started.

With donations of material, labor and generous financial support from a number of organizations and individuals we now meet in a beautiful new building on Route 163. Attending our dedication ceremonies on May 11th, 1985 were state and local dignitaries and a large number of townspeople and friends. This date was also the Town of Bozrah's 199th Birthday. Many favorable comments were expressed. The Rev. Clayton Richard, former Pastor of the Bozrah Center Congregational Church, gave the dedication address and I quote his closing remarks: "I hereby then declare that this Senior Citizen Center is dedicated to the use of the Seniors of this community and for all the rest of us who live in this area, who pass by here and to thank God every day that there are such people living who have given of themselves to make this possible."

The first event held at our new Center was helping our town to celebrate the State of Connecticut's 350th Birthday on June 1, 1985 by blowing up 350 balloons and at exactly 12 o'clock releasing them from the ball field, back of our building. What a sight to see them soaring into the heavens, only to land God knows where.

With this new center at our disposal, we hope to further the Bozrah Senior program by attracting more of the elderly to take part in our projects and encourage togetherness towards the future.

BOZRAH ROD & GUN CLUB

The Bozrah Rod & Gun Club was formed during 1964 to provide good fellowship, to further fish and game interest of the members and the community and to promote conservation and good relations with land owners and sportsmen.

The first slate of officers consisted of President Donald Doubleday; Vice-President Pat Quinn; Treasurer Leo Rankowitz; Secretary Don Willey. Current Charter Members are Ralph Banning and Frank Sullivan.

The club often performs community services and works with other local organizations such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Fire Department.

Over the last 23 years the club located suitable acreage built a meeting hall, a pond and hiking trails. The club has worked closely with state officials in efforts to promote good sportsmanship and conservation. The club supports ethical hunting and hunter safety by providing the local area with qualified conservation education, and firearms safety instructors. These instructors register, instruct and qualify new hunters in accordance with state guide lines.

The current officers for 1986 are: President Warren Speh; Vice-President Dick Rathbun; Treasurer Mike Betten; and Secretary John Bielecki.

BOZRAH MOOSE LODGE #950

Lodge #950 was founded in Norwich on May 9, 1914. The lodge home was at #1 Laurel Hill Avenue for many years.

In July, 1963 they had outgrown the Laurel Hill building and they purchased the American Legion building in Bozrah and moved the lodge there.

In 1985 the lodge name was changed from Norwich to Bozrah.

Two Moose supported projects are Mooseheart and Moosehaven. Mooseheart is located in Illinois and cares for the children of deceased members. Moosehaven is located in Florida and is a retirement home for members.

Bozrah Moose Lodge #950 has always been very active in community service. Some of their many activities are road races for charity, Easter egg hunt for children, sponsor of Senior League baseball, support of volunteer fire departments, scholarships to two graduating students at the Fields Memorial School, bloodmobile every six months and child safety signs for town roads.

In January, 1986 the membership exceeded 500 and continues to grow.

GARDNER LAKE AUTHORITY
WATER PATROL/ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL
SERVINGS THE TOWNS OF
BOZRAH-MONTVILLE-SALEM

The object of the Gardner Lake Authority is to carry out the ordinance ordained by the legal voters of the three member towns-Bozrah, Montville, and Salem and to promulgate rules and regulations with concurrence of the State Agencies as Gardner Lake is a state owned lake.

This ordinance states that the Gardner Lake Authority be composed of three members of each town with each town to equally contribute financially to its operation. Bozrah First Selectman Raymond Barber has now proposed an ordinance to change the membership to a "more equable division as to the amount of the lake in each town" - namely Montville still with three members, but Salem to have four and Bozrah two. The towns would then finance this authority in ratio-as to this membership. It will be some time before this change will be able to take effect, if at all.

The authority at one time had two boats with many patrolmen working. This was possible as the State reimbursed the authority a portion of the patrolman's salaries plus the cost of a good share of the gas and oil used to operate the boats. But the July 1979 budget was adopted without this item and left the authority in a very bad financial situation as they had the patrol out, and had not been informed of the change.

The cost of insurance has sky-rocketed to a large share of the budget, together with the fact that our one boat gets older each year, so the authority has been very limited in the amount of hours during which patrolmen would cover the lake. With the increase in boating nationwide and locally, it has presented quite a problem as to the safety of the people using Gardner Lake. The lake is a state-owned lake and the Department of Environmental Protection does help to cover the patrolling whenever they can, they are spread very thin too, but have been very helpful to the authority in many ways.



BOZRAH BOY SCOUT TROOP 77

The Bozrah Boy Scout Troop has a long and interesting history. Records at the local Boy Scout Council indicate that it was originally chartered as Troop 73 in February, 1946. The sponsoring institution was an organization known as the Group of Citizens. The troop had twelve registered scouts and they met every other Friday at the Fields Memorial School. The first scoutmaster was Orrin Banning with Theodore Abel serving as the committee chairman and such notable townspeople as Albert Tolson, George Brush, Jr., William Berriman, Hyman Bassuk, Joseph G. Lewitz and Lawrence Gilman serving on the troop committee.

In 1947, the troop number was changed from 73 to 77 and Charles Geer was scoutmaster thru 1949 with a membership of six boys.

The number of registered scouts held fairly consistant until 1952 when the sponsoring institution became the Fields Memorial Parent Teachers Association and the meeting place was changed to the Bozrah Town Hall where it remains today. At the same time, Henry Monell became the scoutmaster with Orrin Banning serving as the assistant.

During the fifties, the troop membership exploded with as many as forty scouts registered at the peak. Henry Monell served as scoutmaster from 1952 until 1964 and has held the position the longest of any scoutmaster to date.

In 1965 the Bozrah Volunteer Fire Department became the sponsoring organization and continues in this role today. At this time Henry Monell's assistant scoutmaster, John Kuchy became the scoutmaster and served in this position for the next five years. Under the guidance of John, the number of registrations experienced another boom in growth, reaching a peak of fifty-one scouts in 1967. This number dwindled through the remainder of the seventies.

In September, 1970 thru December, 1976 the Scoutmaster was Manuel Misarski. The enrollment was twenty-five boys. The next period started in 1977 with Dennis Rogan serving as scoutmaster and Russell Schrader as assistant scoutmaster until September, 1978 when Russell took over the leadership until January, 1980. There were sixteen scouts registered that year. The membership trended downward putting the organization in danger of loosing its charter.

At this point, Allen Stacey became scoutmaster and started the rebuilding process that continues today.

In 1980, a group of six scouts joined the troop and started the current era. Today five of these scouts are still registered and provide the vital leadership corps necessary to an organization of this type. Al served as scoutmaster until 1984. During these years the troop membership climbed to twenty.

Upon Al's retirement from the Navy and subsequent relocation out of the area in 1984, William Ballinger became scoutmaster of Troop 77. The troop now has twenty-five registered scouts. They try to maintain an active program for any interested boy between the ages of eleven and eighteen.

With luck, good leadership and an active committee, the troop will reach the twenty-first century robust and active.

RIVERS JANOWICZ POST #138

Ambrose J. Rivers Post #138 American Legion was incorporated on July 27, 1939. Officers were Eugene Manning, John E. Orr, Sr., Joseph Socha, Armond Dibbles, Joseph A. Johnson, and Elmer Gallup.

On November 19, 1941, land was purchased from John Metdiz for the construction of a post home. The new home was dedicated in 1948, on old Route 2.

Sometime after World War II the name of the American Legion Post was changed to the Rivers Janowicz Post. Ambrose J. Rivers was the first man killed from Bozrah in World War I and Peter Janowicz was the first man listed from World War II from Bozrah.

In 1950, the Rivers Janowicz Post #138 was sold to Abraham Schneider of Bozrah. It is now the Bozrah Moose Lodge.

The meetings of Post #138 are now held in the Bozrah Senior Citizen Center on Route 163. At present Post #138 has forty-six members, all active in community services. A few Korea and Vietnam veterans have joined and more could help to rebuild our Legion Post.



G. MANNING, J. ORR, SR., M. O'HEARN, J. SOCHA, R. DECLoux,
A. SCHNEIDER, H. O'CONNELL, R. GILMAN, F. HOMISKI

BOZRAH PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING SERVICE

On August 19, 1953 the residents of the Town of Bozrah voted unanimously, at a town meeting, to establish a Community Nursing Program. Information in reference to a nursing service was presented at the town meeting by Annie L. Follett at the urging of Edith V. Smith, Public Health Nurse. It was agreed that the towns of Bozrah and Franklin would share in the program. Five thousand dollars was budgeted for the first year, the expense being shared by both towns.

A nine member Public Health Nursing Board was appointed by the selectman with representation from Bozrah and Franklin. The first chairman of the Board was Robert Calvert of Franklin.

Professional assistance regarding the implementation of a Community Nursing Program was given by Miss Dorothy Peckham, RN of the United Workers of Norwich and Miss Eunice Peterson, RN of the Ledyard Public Health Nursing Agency. The Bozrah-Franklin Public Health Nursing Service began service in 1954 with a combined program servicing the two elementary schools and the two communities. The office was situated in the Bozrah Town Hall.

Shirley Vasington, RN was the first nurse hired to administer the newly formed Agency.

In 1965 the Medicare bill was passed, which provided federal funds for health care for persons sixty-five years of age and older. At this point in time, under the capable guidance of Mrs. Lucy Cilley, RN the agency became a Medicare Certified Agency, and could thus provide services to Medicare recipients and receive payment for these services from the federal government.

In 1968 with the imposition of many federal regulations governing the functioning of the agency, it became evident that the small agencies would find it increasingly difficult to survive without a full time administrator. Thus the decision was made to close the Agency and contract for services with the United Workers of Norwich. The Bozrah-Franklin Public Health Nursing Board remained to monitor the services received by contractual arrangement. The towns continued to receive the same services to the schools and communities in a combined program.

In March of 1983 a resolution was passed at a town meeting to dissolve the Bozrah-Franklin Public Health Nursing Service. A new nursing board was appointed by First Selectman, Raymond C. Barber. At the present time, the town of Bozrah, through the Administrative Board of the Bozrah Public Health Nursing Service, contracts with the United Community Services (formerly the United Workers of Norwich) for a combined program serving the Fields Memorial School and the Community. The service includes a school health program, dental health program for school children, a school health aide, the services of the Pediatric Nurse Practitioner at Well Child Clinic for pre-schoolers, maternal and

child health supervision, adult health supervision, care of the sick program, Hospice care, Senior Citizens program, Mental Health program, and a "walk-in" blood pressure screening and health counseling program. Professionals available are a registered nurse, physical therapist, occupational therapist, speech therapist, medical social worker in addition to home health aide and homemaker services.

The present Board members are Maria Chiangi, RN, Chairperson, Wenona Crooks, RN, Advisory Committee of United Community Services, Mary Ferentinos, Jane Seder, Gail Coletti, a representative from the Board of Education, and Michael Betten, MD. Mr. Raymond C. Barber, First Selectman is an Ex Officio member.

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Standing from Left:

Keith Robbins, Nik Von Halem
(Asst Chief)

Bob Banning, Chris Lebeau
(Secretary)

Rich Okoney, Nick Tamburrino,
John Combs, Stacey Mathewson,

D.J. Casavant, Debbie Barber
Ted Viadella, Dave Lebrecque

(Treasurer)

Mike Smith (chief)

Kneeling from Left:

Herb Burt, Burt Avery (Advisor)

Jeff Tangari, Asa Lombard

Donna Becotte,

Doub Barber (Advisor)

CONGRATULATIONS, BOZRAH!



We salute you upon the occasion of your 200th Anniversary! We've relished our role as employer and good neighbor, helping to shape Bozrah's great past. And we welcome the challenge the future brings. Working hand-in-hand, we'll continue to make our town the finest of Connecticut's 169! Best wishes!

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OLD HOUSES IN BOZRAH

- * 1710 - Robert Knoblauch, Scott Hill
- * 1732 - Stephen Seder, Bishop Road
- 1735 - Arthur Ingves, Route 163
- 1749 - Thomas Ames, Route 82
- 1750 - A. Glenn Staebner, Blue Hill
- 1754 - John Noblet, Route 82
- 1760 - John Stangle, Scott Hill
- * 1771 - Luis Martinez, Old Route 2
- 1780 - Tim Baffaro, Old Route 2
- 1782 - Eugene Senecal, Scott Hill
- 1782 - John Combs, Old Route 2
- 1782 - George Lambert, Scott Hill
- 1782 - Lloyd Abel, Bashon Hill
- 1782 - John Robbins, Route 163
- 1785 - Bernard Jacques, Route 163
- 1790 - Warren Strong, Old Route 2
- 1795 - George Gager, Gager Rd.
- 1835 - Pat Quinn, Lake Rd.

No Dates available on the following:

Andre Arpin, South Rd.
Edward Canning, Route 163
Charles Connell, Old Route 2
Harold Diehl, Sr. Route 87
Herbert Doubleday, Bashon Hill
Reuben Fleming, Old Route 2
Charles Fuller, Bear Hill
Charles Geer, Route 163
Donald Gorman, Bashon Hill
Russell Hibbard, Caroline Rd.
Margaret Tanner, Caroline Rd.
Julius Job, South Rd.
Gerald Morin, Bishop Rd.
John Onsager, Bozrah St. Ext.
Albert Ross, South Rd.
Rose Sullivan, Old Route 2
Minnie Taylor, Wawecus Hill Rd.

This list represents what are thought to be the older homes in town. The dates given were taken from town tax records and many of these homes can be found on the 1868 map of Bozrah. However, actual dates of construction have not been authenticated.

Histories were submitted on the homes noted with an asterisk.

Our apologies are extended to anyone whose home was overlooked.

KNOBLAUCH HOUSE
BY
ANN KNOBLAUCH

As best as we can determine our house was built on land belonging to Sgt. Israel Lathrop, who was born February 1, 1687. He was married to Mary Fellows in 1710 and they had a child, Jedidiah born on January 4, 1718.

Jedidiah married Abigail Hyde on September 27, 1742. They lived in the house soon after they were married. There were five children by this marriage. Abigail died in 1751 and her primitive gravestone was found in a closed up fireplace.

We believe that approximately at the time of the Revolution, the house came into the possession of the Hyde family. It remained in the Hyde family until 1882. After 1882 the house passed through various owners until we purchased it in 1973.

The house is a basic center chimney colonial. The huge stone chimney begins in the basement and gradually tapers as it goes through the roof. There are five fireplaces off the chimney. The large kitchen fireplace has a nine foot opening and a back stone bee hive bake oven.

Although some of the wooden paneling had been removed, we were fortunate to have old floors, hardware, and two panel doors. One of the beaded wall boards in an upstairs wood paneled room is twenty-three inches wide.

There are five windows across the front of the house, an early feature. The home has always been a farm situated on approximately one hundred acres.



THORNMEADOW FARM
STEPHEN AND JANE SEDER

Issac Huntington was born in Norwich, Conn. He was one of thirteen children born to Issac and Rebecca Lathrop Huntington. He married the former Lucy Edgerton.

Issac Huntington built his house in 1732, on land located on Bishop Rd. The house is thought to have been built in two sections, because of the difference in floor levels found on the second floor. The first section of the house consisted of the large keeping room-kitchen area-the sleeping quarters and the dining room. The second section which was added to the front of the house consisted of two large rooms on the first floor and two more rooms directly above on the second floor and another staircase.

The house retains most of its original features such as-wide floor boards, chestnut paneling, seven fireplaces (two with beehive ovens). Going up the back staircase there is a "tipsy closet" which was used to store chambersticks and a bit of "cheer" to take the chill out of going up to a chilly second floor. There is also a set of crown H-hinges. Most of the crowns were cut off during the Revolutionary War as a protest against the English rule.

Issac Huntington was said to be a weaver as was his father before him. During the first Town Meeting which was held on June 26, 1786, Issac Huntington was elected Treasurer. He also was the first representative from Bozrah to attend the General Assembly.

The house remained in the Huntington family until the mid 1840's when it was purchased by Noyes Sisson. The property was then sold to James Bishop in 1866 and remained in the Bishop family until 1953 when it was purchased by A. Gibbs and Catherine Mitchell.

The current owners bought the house and property from Catherine Mitchell in 1980.



MARTINEZ (STONE) HOUSE

The house was standing in 1772, however, when it was built and for whom isn't recorded in the Bozrah Town records.

On page eighty-nine of Book 1 (June 1, 1772) Nathaniel Fish owned the property. Since then it has changed hands twenty-four times.

For thirty-two years, from 1810 to 1842 the property stayed in the Ford family - father to son and brother to brother.

In 1854 Josiah Backus bought the property at an estate auction for \$1,050.

On May 23, 1910 the house changed hands twice on the same date - going from Barnett Levi to William Kilroy to Dora Levi. Three times the name Levi appears on the deed, 1910, 1913 and 1921.

In the past two hundred fourteen years the longest that it has ever been owned by one person is twenty-nine years by Anne H. Martinez from 1944 to 1973.

For the past forty-two years, since 1944, the property has been in the Martinez family, the longest on record.



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FITCH MANSION IN BACKGROUND

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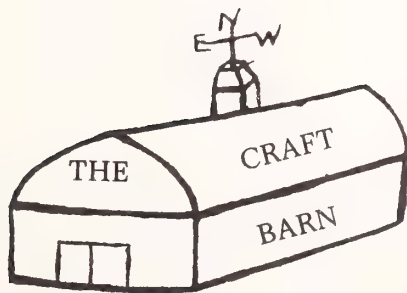
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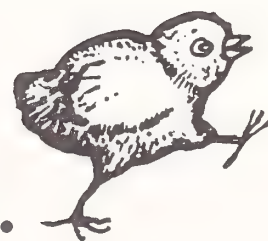


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ALLYN

Edward Anson Allyn, Sr. was born November 16, 1838 in Cornwall, Connecticut. On November 16, 1865 he married Josephine Charlotte Sevin of Bozrah, Connecticut. He was in the Civil War where he contracted malaria. He died of apoplexy at the age of 48. They lived in the Sevin homestead "on the hill". This house was later known as the Allyn homestead, and burned in 1937 after it had been sold. Josephine was active in community affairs, and played the organ in the Fitchville Baptist Church for many years.

Their children were: Edward Anson Allyn, born on July 21, 1869. He married Belle Keables and had two children, Rosina and Loretta who are both dead. He later went to Wisconsin returning after many years and married Jane Maplesden. He died in 1937.

Josephine Maria Allyn, born August 24, 1871 was known to everyone as "Pheeny". She lived at the homestead for many years, and was married to Charles Gilcher. She died in 1943.

Jeremiah Potts Allyn was born October 10, 1873. He married Eva Hedler, and they had four children: Edward Grosvenor, known to all as "Gun", Francis Palmer who died in infancy, Sadie Elizabeth and Paul Valentine. Jeremiah, known as Jerry, built a house at the "foot of the hill", where he lived until he died in 1955. During his lifetime he served as Grand Juror for the Town of Bozrah for 26 years. "Gun" and Paul are both dead, and Sadie is married to Alban Fish, and they live on Scott Hill Road.

Emma Sevin Allyn was born on September 10, 1877. She married Fredrick Robinon in 1897 and had one child from this marriage - Henry Robinson who died in 1966. She later married Charles Morgan and had three children- Allyn who lives in California; John in California, and Harriet who lives in Wethersfield. Emma died in California in 1961.

George Valentine Allyn was born July 14, 1882, and married Estelle Austin in 1908. They had two children: William, who died at the age of 5, and George, who lives in Uncasville. George Sr. died in New London in 1938.

"Gun" Allyn married Grace Mahoney in 1929 and she died in 1930. He later married Elizabeth Main and they had one son Clifford.

Sadie Allyn married Alban Fish in 1935, and they have one son, Ronald who lives on Scott Hill Road.

Paul Allyn married Dorothy Perkins in 1944, and they had one son Jerrold, who lives in Fitchville with his wife, Roxanne and their three children.

Allyn Morgan has no children.

John Morgan has two children.

Harriet Morgan married Roland Brodner in 1933, and they had three children, Allyn, Michael and Susan. Harriet's husband died in 1985.

George Allyn married Helen Egger in 1943, and has two children, William and Lynn.

ABEL

Mary Abel Bosworth (Great-Grandmother) had three sons, Edward Abel, Louis Abel and Elijah Abel.

Elijah S. Abel married Amorette Avery and they had the following children: Ethel L. Abel, the oldest, born January 21, 1891, Amorette Mildred born May 4, 1893, Lloyd and Lawrence (twins) born February 18, 1895, Alfred L. born October 30, 1898, and Theodore S. born August 8, 1902.

Ethel L. married Jabez G. Lathrop and were the parents of two daughters, Louise L. Strouse and Charlotte A. Lahtrop.

Amorette Mildred married George W. Maples and were the parents of two daughters, Ruth M. Davis and Mildred Champlin.

Lloyd married Alice Rodman in 1917 and they were the parents of three children, Lloyd T., Mary A. Crouch and Inez A. Lattimore. In 1933 they bought a farm just down the road from the original homestead. On the farm they raised calves and grew vegetables. Lloyd worked for Palmer Bros. and later at the Gilman Mill. One daughter still lives in Bozrah.

Lawrence married Robye Boynton and they had one daughter Marion Theilan.

Alfred married Ethel Bruce and they had one daughter, Dorothy Ault.

Theodore married Ethel Brown and they had one daughter, Mae Agnes Ladyga.

The earliest memories of the Abel house on Bashon Hill (now the Gager Home) was when the family went there for Thanksgiving dinner.

For many years Grandpa Abel operated a blacksmith shop across the road from the homestead.

Many descendants are still residents of Bozrah.

BEARD

Roy Leffingwell Beard was born in Bozrah on August 28, 1895, to Herbert and Fannie Leffingwell Beard. He was the first born and only son. His two sisters were Elsie born January 11, 1895 and Evelyn born August 11, 1901.

Fannie Leffingwell Beard their mother was the second child of Joshua Charles and Mary (Ross) born on January 25, 1872 in Bozrah. She was a direct descendant, through her father Joshua, of Nathaniel Leffingwell, the fourth son of Lt. Thomas Leffingwell.

Roy L. Beard was a lifelong resident of Bozrah. He, with his father owned and operated a successful dairy farm in the Leffingwell section of Bozrah. Roy was united in marriage to Olga E. Johnson of Baltic on April 4, 1925. Together, they were active in church and civic affairs in Bozrah. Roy served on the Rationing Board in Bozrah during World War II. He also served as a Tax Assessor in the town of Bozrah for over twenty years. Their daughter, Betty Kinne still resides in Bozrah.

FIELDS

The original Fields family came from Ireland and to the best of our knowledge the family resided in either Cork or Kerry County which are located in the southwestern part of Ireland. The father's name was Thomas and he married a girl by the name of Murphy. They had three sons: Thomas, William and Timothy.

When the boys reached the age of twenty or so they decided to come to the United States to live. As was the custom in those days the oldest son, in this case, Thomas, remained at home and the younger children went first. William and Timothy arrived in New York in the 1850's and moved to Bozrahville. They worked on the railroad and later in the rubber mill. Several years later Thomas arrived from Ireland and spent the first week shoveling coal in New York for \$.99 a day. When no one came to meet him, Thomas proceeded to find his brothers by himself. For the next few years, Thomas worked in Yantic on Mr. Backus' farm.

Around 1860 the Fields brothers purchased a farm in Lebanon from a Mr. Holmes. Today, part of the farm belongs to the City of Norwich as the Red Cedar Lake reservoir. The farm contained 135 acres of land and there were two houses, a barn, an old well and several sheds. Down a long path there was an old swimming hole (this is now the reservoir). William and Thomas lived in the larger house while Timothy remained in the smaller one.

After five or six years, Timothy moved back to Bozrahville and there lived in a small house on the main road. Timothy then worked in the cotton mill. Thomas remained on the farm until 1888, when after the famous blizzard he and his family moved to Fitchville. During this memorable storm the snow was so deep that they had to enter the farm from the loft in order to feed the animals. In Fitchville they lived in the big block, now known as Mill Pond Apartments, opposite St. John's Church. The following year William moved to Fitchville also.

While on the farm the children had to walk over two miles each day to attend the Goshen School which was located on the Colchester Road. Every Saturday night there used to be a dance at a place on Scott Hill. The farm was sold approximately sixty years ago. In all the years that the three original brothers lived in this country, they never lived more than a couple of miles apart.

John Donald Fields, infant son of John T. (Jack) Fields of Taftville is the last male to have the name of Fields. The Fitchville Post Office had been run by the Fields family for sixty years. Elizabeth (Betsy) Fields Stimpson, daughter of John and Mary Fields was the first Fields to graduate from the Fields Memorial School. The school was named in honor of John F.

Fields, son of Thomas and Catherine Fields. He was chairman and on the school board for over thirty years.

John L. Fields, grandson of Thomas Fields, presently resides with his wife, Mary, in Fitchville. Timothy Lenehan, great grandson of William Fields resides in Fitchville with his wife, Patricia and their three daughters.

BESWICK

James Beswick was born on the boat coming from England in 1849. He was married to Julia Lucas and they had eleven children. They settled in Fitchville and lived in the house next to the Fitchville Baptist Church.

One of their sons, John was born in 1867. He married Carrie Thompson in 1888. Carrie was the daughter of Francis H. Thompson who had come to Fitchville in 1887. All of the men worked in the Palmer Bros. Mill.

John and Carrie had two sons, Frank and John. Frank died in infancy.

John who was born in September 1, 1893 married Rose Brown in 1918. They lived in the village of Fitchville. After he returned from World War I he worked as a foreman in Palmer Bros. Mill. He served as Tax Collector in Bozrah during the 1920's. He died in 1931.

John and Rose had three children: Martha who married George Lewitz. They lived in Bozrah until 1979. They had four children.

John, Jr. who married Evelyn Kimball. They lived in Fitchville for 10 years then moved to Florida. They had two daughters.

Doris who married Harry Grandy in 1946. Harry was the son of Albert and Estella Drake Grandy. They lived all of their married life in Bozrah except when they left for twelve years while Harry was Superintendent at the Maplewood Cemetery. They returned in 1982. Harry died in 1984. Doris still lives in Fitchville.

Harry had a daughter, Jeanne, by a former marriage. Jeanne married Frank Feraco and they had two children. They all reside in Norwich.

Harry and Doris had two children Robert and Susan.

Susan married Edward Pytko. They have three children and live in Norwich.

Robert married Linda Gullak and they live in the Parker Homestead on Route 163. Robert is the fifth generation to live in Bozrah.

GAGER

In the spring of 1630, Dr. William Gager and his only remaining son John set sail from England on the Arbella. William was to be the physician for the Massachusetts Bay Company, led by his friend Governor John Winthrop. They sighted land near Salem on June 11, 1630, after eighty-four days at sea, but William died on September 30, 1630 of an illness contracted during the voyage. Ten years old at his father's death, John lived in the Massachusetts colony until age seventeen, when he left with John Winthrop, Jr. to establish a colony at the mouth of the Connecticut River. As a reward for his participation in the Pequot Indian wars that followed, John was awarded a two hundred acre land grant along the Thames River, in what is now Ledyard (then part of New London). Isolated from civilization, John Gager, his wife Elizabeth Gore Gager and his family eventually moved to Norwich in 1659. Shortly after their move to Norwich, John acquired land in the New Concord Parish (Bozrah), which he later sold to his son Samuel in 1688. On December 10, 1703 John Gager died at the age of eighty-two, after having played a role in the establishment of Old Saybrook, New London and Norwich.

Samuel Gager married Rebecca Lay Raymond and built a large house along what is now Wahconah Drive in Bozrah. Born on February 6, 1654, Samuel died on June 11, 1740 one hundred and ten years, to the day, after his father had sighted land off the Massachusetts coast. Upon his death, Samuel left to his son Samuel (born December 1702), the family farm.

At the age of seventy-one Samuel was married, for the first time, to Hannah Caulkins and they had two children, Samuel (born August 1, 1775) and William (born May 25, 1777). Upon his death at age eighty-one, Samuel divided his property between his two sons. William received the main house on the hill and Samuel the land in the valley along with several barns and outbuildings.

On his land, Samuel built the house which still stands today in its original state. On April 12, 1798, Samuel married Cynthia Meech and they had seven children, of which only three survived. Their only son married wealthy Ann Huntington and they had four children before young Samuel was killed in a logging accident on the farm. Since his wife had died from illness several years before, the children were left to be raised by their grandparents.

Upon the death of his grandparents, Samuel's son, John Jay Gager inherited the family homestead. While he continued to maintain the farm, John also opened a dry goods store in Norwich. This was a continuation of the store started by his grandfather in the late 1700's, and began a family tradition in the dry goods business that was to last until his son's death in the 1920's.

John Jay Gager and Mary Hough had three children, Lillie Eliza (born 1870) and twin boys, Samuel and Arthur (born October 22, 1871). While her parents and brothers died quite young, Lillie never married and lived in the family home until her death in 1959 at the age of eighty-nine. Her brother, Arthur, had children, Francis, Mary and John Jay Gager, II.

John Jay Gager, II was born in Quaker Hill, Ct. in 1915. He married Rachel Clark on December 15th, 1935. He entered the Navy as a physician during World War II and spent the war years in the Pacific. John Jay Gager, III was born April 4, 1942. He resides in Manchester, Mass. and has two daughters, Kimberly and Shawn.

John Jay Gager, II married Alice Ogle on January 4th, 1947. They had two sons. George was born October 30th, 1947 and still resides in Bozrah. He has three sons; Austin, Morgan and Grant and one daughter Eliza.

Arthur was born September 23, 1949. He now resides in Pennsylvania and has one daughter, Katherine.

In 1967 Dr. John Jay Gager acquired the family homestead from his sister and completed its restoration in 1972, just before his death.

Now owned by George Gager, the family homestead is undergoing changes that is hoped will ultimately lead to its becoming a facility open to the public. The land has served as a home for the Gager family for almost three hundred years and the existing house has remained virtually unchanged since its construction almost two hundred years ago. Many of the family diaries, letters and records of the last two hundred years still remain, leaving a unique historical perspective of one family's life in Bozrah.



GILMAN

As of 1986, five generations of the Gilman family have lived in Bozrah, more specifically in the mill village located in the northwestern section of the town. Nathan Gilman and his wife Clara Stern Gilman were the first to arrive, in 1905 when Nathan acquired one of the oldest mills in the country, situated in what was then known as Bozrahville. His parents Moses and Rebecca Portnoy Gilman followed. Nathan, then a man in his twenties and a recent immigrant to the United States who had been in business in New York City, relocated to a village which at that time consisted not only of the mill itself but also of houses built for the mill workers, a general store, a one-room schoolhouse, and a community center. Here he founded the Gilman Brothers Company, which originally manufactured filling material for mattresses; and the company has remained in business since, despite a series of destructive fires and floods, and changes in the company product.

Until the early 1920's the Gilman factory depended for its operation on water power from the Yantic River, since electricity was not yet available in the isolated country town. When Nathan learned that the supply of water was to be reduced due to the creation of a new reservoir, and realizing that all residents of the town would benefit from electric power, he requested and in 1921 was granted a charter by the state to establish the Bozrah Electric Company (later renamed the Bozrah Light and Power Company) to serve the towns of Bozrah and Lebanon. The first power lines were installed in Leffingwell, and gradually, at a time when the heavy labor required to dig holes for and install electric poles was done by men rather than machines, the entire town gained access to electric power.

In response to a petition by area residents, in 1932 the village of Bozrahville officially became known as Gilman and so joined Fitchville and Leffingwell as sections of the Town of Bozrah recalling particular families who had lived there.

Of the seven children of Nathan and Clara Gilman (George, Lucille, Martin, Lawrence, Seymour, Patricia and Charles), three remained residents of Bozrah. Lawrence and Charles have been associated with the Gilman Brothers Company all of their lives, working first with their father and then on their own for many years as President and Vice-President, respectively. Charles Gilman is also President of the Bozrah Light and Power Company and Lawrence is Chairman of the Board. In addition to having business ties with the Town of Bozrah, Lawrence Gilman served as its First Selectman for five terms (from 1943 to 1953), and he later represented the town in the state legislature as Representative (from 1947 to 1955) and Senator (from 1955 to 1957). Martin established Marty Gilman, Inc. in the 1930's to

manufacture athletic equipment, and his company remains in operation under the management of his wife Shirley.

Currently, some of Nathan and Clara's grandchildren are associated with the Gilman Brothers Company and Marty Gilman, Inc. as well as with the Gilman Corporation and Gilman Financial Services. There are nineteen grandchildren of Nathan and Clara, and fifteen great-children. One member of the fifth generation, a six-year-old great-grandson of Nathan Gilman, continues what has become since 1905 the Gilman family tradition of residence in the Town of Bozrah.

GRIBBIN

John Gribbin and his wife Mary Connolly arrived in Colchester, Connecticut from County Monaghan, Ireland in 1880 with their three children, Catherine, Francis, Mary - Two more children Peter and Margaret were born in Colchester. They moved to Bozrah where Mr. Gribbin was employed at the Palmer Bros. Mill.

Catherine married Patrick Kelly. All of their eight children were born and raised in Bozrah. The family moved to Bridgeport, Conn. after World War I.

Francis married Mary Kingberger. They lived in Bozrah their entire lives. Mr. Gribbin was a foreman in Palmer Bros. Mill for fifty years until his retirement. He was active in community affairs and was a trustee of St. John's Church for many years. His wife Mary was a leader in the community. She was constantly in demand for all works of charity. Their children were, Charles, John, Francis, Mary and Catherine. Charles died as a child.

John married Nellie Gilcher. John was a representative from Bozrah for two terms. They had four children: John, Ruth Breslin, Margaret Mathewson and Maureen Kopetz. Some of their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren are still residents of Bozrah.

Francis married Kathleen Donovan. They had two children Charles and Kathleen Bissonette. Charles and family are still residents of Bozrah.

Mary married Walter Kelly. Mary was a nurse at William W. Backus Hospital for many years. They have no children.

Catherine married Nelson Ladd. They are still residents of Bozrah and active in community and church affairs. They have four children: Cynthia Twomey, James, William, and Catherine Wiley.

CHARLES GILMAN

Charles M. Gilman was the youngest of seven children of Nathan and Clara Gilman. He was born July 22, 1921 in Norwich, Connecticut and, except for four years of Army service in World War II, has lived his entire life in the Village of Gilman in the Town of Bozrah. He is a graduate of the Carnegie-Mellon University, a retired Army Colonel and is a registered Professional Engineer in the State of Connecticut. He is presently President of the Bozrah Light and Power Company and Vice-President of the Gilman Brothers Company in Gilman.

On December 2, 1950 he was united in marriage with Mary Jane Evans in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Mary Jane was born December 10, 1924 in Norwich, Conn. and at the time of her marriage was an English teacher at the Norwich Free Academy. She is a graduate of St. Joseph College in West Hartford, Conn.

Their home was built across the street from the Nathan Gilman homestead and the Gilman Post Office in 1951 and they have lived there ever since. Eight children were born of this marriage, all in Norwich, Conn. All attended the Fields Memorial School and the Norwich Free Academy.

Kate was born September 4, 1951. She is an accomplished artist. She was united in marriage with George Kazakidis and they are the parents to Alexander and George. She and her family currently reside in Arlington, Ma.

Amy was born August 27, 1952. She has a bachelor of science degree in Classical Archaeology. She was married to Emanuel Kazakidis. She currently resides with her husband in Philadelphia, Pa.

Jonathan C. Gilman was born July 30, 1953. He is a graduate of Baldwin-Wallace College in Berea, Ohio. He was married in Berea, Ohio to Beverly Schilling. They have a son Nathan Alan. Jonathan and family currently reside in Gilman next door to the old homestead. He is President of Gilman Financial Services.

Meg was born on January 26, 1955. She was married to Anthony Mazzella in August, 1984. They have a son, Anthony, Jr. She currently resides with her family in Waterford, Ct.

Evan was born May 1, 1956. After attending Boston University, he returned to Gilman to help in the family manufacturing business. He currently lives at home in Gilman with his mother and father.

Cyrus was born June 21, 1958. He attended Boston University and subsequently returned to enter the family manufacturing business. He now lives at home with his mother and father.

Charles M. Gilman, Jr. was born May 19, 1962. After attending Boston University, he returned to enter the family-run Public Utility company in Gilman. He now lives at home with his mother and father.

Sara was born March 23, 1965. She is currently a junior at Smith College in Northhampton, Ma. studying classics. She lives at home with her mother and father.

GEJDENSON

Szloma and Juljia Gejdenson arrived in Bozrah thirty-five years ago, (1950), having escaped the persecutions of both Hitlerism and Communism during World War II. They bought a small dairy farm on Bashon Hill and faced difficulties in trying to put the past behind them and of adapting to both a country and way of life that were foreign to them. Those were difficult days, but they were made much easier by their neighbors, whose friendliness and support made them realize why Bozrah is so special.

Mrs. Gejdenson said, " I will always be grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Abel, the Crouches and Mrs. Emma Doubleday. Emma Doubleday would tell us when we had to pay our taxes or change our clocks from spring to fall so that we would not miss the milk truck. The Crouches taught our children the language and customs of our new home. The Abels, the Crouches and Emma Doubleday, along with our many other freinds, the Nebesnys just to name one family, helped us then and remain close friends to this day.

It is in large part because of our good neighbors that our family has remained close by. Ike runs the family farm and he has taken an interest in local politics as a Second Selectman. Gail, her husband and two lovely sons live nearby in Norwich. Finally, Sam, who also has taken interest in politics, lives with his wife Karen and their two children just down the road-when he is not in Washington as the Second District's representative in Congress. I am proud of all of them, and we are proud to call Bozrah our home."

KINGBERGER

Charles Kingberger came to this country with his son Charles Jr. through the efforts of one of the sons of Asa Fitch around 1850. He was a cabinet maker and was hired by the Fitch's to do cabinet making for them. Some of the pieces were handed down from the Fitch to the Palmer's and are now in the homes of descendents of the Kingbergers.

His son Charles Jr. married Mary McNamarra and they had four children:

Philip who died as a young man.

Mary married to Francis Gribbin. They lived their lives in Fitchville. Some of their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, still reside in Bozrah.

Anne was married to Frank Brooks. They had three daughters Catherine, Mary and Anne. They lived part of their lives in Bozrah.

Charles III who married Anna McGinn lived all their lives in Bozrah working at Palmer Bros. Mill. They had no children.

LEFFINGWELL-ROSS-DRAKE-GRANDY

Thomas Leffingwell was one of the original settlers of Norwich and many of his relatives settled in and around the area now known as Bozrah. Five of his grandsons, including Samuel are said to have built among the hills of the village which now bears their name.

Samuel had ten children, among them a son Andrew, who also named a son Andrew. This Leffingwell built the first Leffingwell Baptist Church. He was the first Deacon and one of the eleven original members. Gurdon, Andrew's brother and Elisha, his son were also Leffingwell residents. Elisha's only child, Mary Ann (Ross) was mother to Mary Lavinia, one of thirteen children.

Mary's sister, Lillian married William I. Drake. His father Samuel S. Drake was registered as a veteran from Bozrah in 1863, with the 7th Regiment, Conn. Volunteers.

Their daughter L. Estella married Albert Grandy in 1902. The current Jacques house was their home at that time and they raised potatoes on what was known as Grandy's Plains. He also ran a milk route. They had six children, Mildred, Doris, Harry, Athalie, Hazel and Albert.

Hazel, Athalie and Albert settled outside of Bozrah.

Mildred married Paul Bradlaw who was caretaker of the Gager Homestead for many years. She taught in several schools including the Bozrah Street School.

Harry's family is discussed under the Beswick history.

In 1929 Doris married Orrin H. Banning and they had two children, Ralph and James. Orrin was honored by the town celebrating an Orrin Banning Day. Cited were his many years as Chaplain of the Bozrah Vol. Fire Co., is role in the formation of the Bozrah Boy Scouts, Troop 77, and his many other church and community positions.

James lives on Hough Rd. with his wife Margaret and her son. His children, Carolyn, Michael, Elizabeth and Virginia have all married and moved from Bozrah. James is a member of the Bozrah Vol. Fire Co.

Ralph is a charter member of the Bozrah Vol. Fire Co. and a past chief. His wife Dorothy has served on three town boards and is a charter member of the fire company Auxiliary. They have six children, Ralph, David and Daniel are married and live out of town. Robert and Russell are at home and Evelyn and her husband William Brown with their daughter Elizabeth reside in Bozrah.

Elizabeth Banning Brown represents the tenth generation in this family line to reside in Bozrah.

LATHROP
(LOWTHROPPE)

In the new world the records show that John Lowthroppe sailed for New England in 1634, landing in Boston.

Samuel Lathrop was with his father; he was fourteen years old. Samuel was the only one of fourteen children who came to Connecticut. He married Elizabeth Scudder in 1644 and about 1647 moved to New London. In 1668 he moved to Norwich. His two sons, Joseph and Israel were with him.

Israel was a man of worldly thrift and had a family of enterprising sons who are said to have planted themselves on seven hills within the nine square miles of Norwich.

Israel, Jr. lived on Blue Hill, and John lived on Meetinghouse Hill in Franklin. William and Jabez lived on Plain Hill, and Ebenezer at the foot of Long Hill. Samuel settled in New Concord, now Bozrah. Where Benjamin resided we do not know. Between 1670 and 1838 there were one hundred forty-three children born to the Lathrop family in the Norwich area.

We know of a number of families residing in Bozrah in the early 1900's. The Edward Lathrops ran a farm at the top of Boggy Ledges on Bishop Road, where the Main family now resides. This was the homestead to Maude Lathrop Collins.

Jabez Lathrop lived on Bozrah Street at the corner of Hough Road. He carried on the farming operation there. He also served on the Board of Tax Review for many years.

Just up the street, in a stone house, lived Elmer and Henry Lathrop.

Frank Lathrop ran a farm where the Goulart family now lives. Frank was responsible for running a sizeable operation with his two sons, Harold and Clyde. At one time he was First Selectman of the Town.

Roy Lathrop lived in Fitchville next to the Post Office. He worked for the Palmer Bros. as a yard foreman in charge of Transportation.

Ralph Lathrop was a Truck and Lettering Shop owner which he founded in 1948. In 1953 he constructed a large shop in the Leffingwell section of town. He discontinued this service in 1984.

We do not know how many Lathrops there are, but we do know they are spread all over the world. There are possibly more Lathrops living in Bozrah now than at any previous time.

The Mormon Church of Salt Lake City has conducted an extensive research into the Lathrop family. This research has proved that the family is one of the five oldest in the United States with the greatest number of prominent citizens related to it.

LATHROPS OF BLUE HILL

Israel Lathrop, Sr., third son of Samuel Lathrop and grandson of the Rev. John Lathrop, lived in Norwich in 1668.

One of his sons, Israel Lathrop, Jr. settled on Blue Hill in 1710. He built his house on the side hill near a spring.

Israel Jr.'s son Simeon born in 1723, married in 1749, built a house on the top of this hill. It stood northwest of the house now owned by the Staebners.

In 1770, Simeon began building the house which now stands on the crest of Blue Hill. Simeon's son, Andrew had seven children. One was named for his father Simeon. This child was born, lived and died in the Blue Hill home. (His only son by his first wife was killed in the Battle of Bull Run). All ten of his children were born in this house. His daughter, Jane Bucklin Lathrop, wed Lucien Hamilton Smith on November 21, 1852 in the Congregational Parsonage in Bozrah Center, then returned to the homestead to receive guests. It is said that she looked radiant in her wedding gown of gold taffeta! Jane and her husband settled in another section of Franklin, but fifteen years later, other members of the family insisted that they move back to the ancestral home to care for her father, now eighty years old and his sister, Dyce Farnham, now eighty-two years.

Jane and Lucien returned to her father's home, which pleased him very much, as she had always been his favorite child. They took over the management of the farms and all went well until 1879 when Jane's husband suffered a fall in the barn which proved fatal.

With help she was able to continue running the farm. The following year, her daughter, Estella Smith, married a distant relation Clayton Hyde Lathrop, in the family home.

Jane's father, Simeon Lathrop, died at home in 1886 at the age of ninety-four.



JABEZ LATHROP

In the year 1895, John Milton N. Lathrop, left Blue Hill in Franklin with his wife, Lucretia Hyde Hough Lathrop, and with their three sons James, Clifford Alanson and Jabez Grover, moved to Bozrah. They had purchased the Simeon Abel house and moved in when Jabez was four years old.

James, the eldest son, died from polio at the age of 19.

Clifford A. married Caroline Davis of Franklin. He worked at Palmer Bros. in Fitchville and later at the New London office of Palmer Bros. Two children were born to them, Elizabeth Palmer Lathrop and John Milton Lathrop.

Jabez Grover married Ethel L. Abel on April 30, 1913. They were the parents of two daughters, Louise who married George H. Strouse, Jr. and Charlotte Amelia who married Melvin Tinker Lathrop.

George and Louise Strouse were the parents of three sons: Robert L. George W., and Richard H.

Melvin and Charlotte were the parents of four sons: Melvin Earl, Jabez A., William F. and Donald T. Melvin Tinker Lathrop passed away on September 16, 1974. Charlotte still lives in Bozrah on Scott Hill Road. Her sons and their families also live in town.

Jabez Grover Lathrop spent his entire life, from the age of four, in the "old" house until his death on July 6, 1976.

LEWITZ

The Lewitz family came to Bozrah in 1920. They lived in the house the Gejdenson's now live in on Bashon Hill Rd. They stayed there almost two years and moved to Fitchville in 1922 in the old Allen house that finally burned down. There were four families that lived in that house.

From there they moved to Bozrah St. in a house that was built in 1732 where a daughter Helen now lives.

Bozrah St. was a dirt road back then. In 1925 the tar went in. It went to the top of Spicer Hill. The gravel for the road came from the Grandy Plains.

The Lewitz family ran a little country store across from the house. They sold groceries, ice cream, kerosene and had one gas pump. There was only one kind of gas then.

They cut ice on a pond that was fed from Gardner Brook by canal. They needed the ice for preserving ice cream and other perishables.

There was also a blacksmith shop on the end of the long shed that is still there.

They also had cattle and sold milk and raised calves and sold them for extra money.

SWEENEY

The Sweeney family has had six generations live in Bozrah since the first family migrated here from Ireland in the early 1800's.

The first Sweeney was John who came to Bozrah and worked at the Waterman Farm in Lebanon. John saved his meager salary, and one by one he was able to bring his five sons to America. The only son to stay in this area was John Sweeney, Jr. who later married Margaret Lynch, another immigrant from Ireland. John Sweeney, Jr. died at a relatively early age, but not before his wife had given birth to nine children. Most of the older children went to work at an early age and settled in the Bozrah area: John Sweeney married Kathryn Foley, Katherine Sweeney married Lawrence Dixon, Margaret Sweeney married Walter Brown, Michael Sweeney married Mary McCarthy, and Eleanor Sweeney and Mary Sweeney remained unmarried. The other children Patrick, Jeremiah and Thomas moved to Norwich. At one time or another this whole family worked at the Palmer Bros. Mill in Fitchville, and they lived in what is now Mill Pond Apartments.

Of this 4th generation, the Dixon family had two children, one of whom, Margaret Hantman, still lives in Fitchville, the son of Lawrence lives in Lebanon.

The John Sweeney family had two daughters, Mary Gilman and Martha Arsenault. They both still live in Fitchville.

The Brown family had three children, Rita Smith lives in Fitchville, while the two sons live in Norwich and Rhode Island.

Michael Sweeney had one son, Paul and he lives in Fitchville.

We are now on the 5th generation who stayed in Fitchville, but much has changed with the closing of the mill, and while many of us have stayed: Paul, Patrick and Sheila Sweeney, Gail Shea, Judy Blanch and Terry Smith, Michele and Joseph Arsenault, and Dan, Tim and Bob Gilman. Other Sweeney descendants, reside in Texas, Washington, D. C., Mass., Rhode Island, New Haven, and Lebanon, Ct.

The 6th generation of Sweeneys, presently residing in Bozrah, include Robert Blanch, Heather Shea, Evan and Jessica Smith.

The Sweeneys have long been involved in local politics and civic affairs; beginning with John Sweeney, III, who served as Judge of Probate for Bozrah, as well as the New London County Sheriff in 1938. Additionally he served two terms in the Connecticut General Assembly. Continuing this tradition, at the present time are Rita Smith on the Board of Assessors, Martha Arsenault as Treasurer of the Democratic Town Committee, Daniel Gilman as Judge of Probate and Tim Gilman as a Justice of the Peace.

JOHN S. (STARR) SULLIVAN

John S. Sullivan was one of the town's early settlers, having purchased the William F. Bailey farm in the year 1895. He was a man of strength and conviction, a revered leader and dedicated individual to his chosen career in life. His boundless energies helped to shape the future of things as we see and enjoy today.

In addition to raising a family of six sons and one daughter, insisting that they equip themselves with the best education that funds at that time would allow, he ran a dairy farm with approximately eighty heads of cattle. (To milk twenty to thirty cows by hand before going off to high school was all in a days work some of the boy's can recall!)

Mr. Sullivan was a pioneer in his work. Amongst his main visionary endeavors he was the supplier of countless telephone poles and miles of railroad ties as well as highway guardrail fence posts.

He gave himself selfishly and timelessly and in the governing of the town, being the First Selectman for many years in addition to other elected offices.

With a career that spanned eighty years, Mr. Sullivan was a man of achievement. He always faced the future with confidence and optimism. However, all of his achievements were not without trials and tribulations. One of his early contracts was the hauling of products of the Yantic River Paper Mill located just west of the farm and of which he was an officer. The Mill was leveled by fire at a great loss.

His son Francis and his wife lived on the farm. Their son Francis and his wife Sue, live on Bashon Hill.



SCHATZ

Samuel and Rose Schatz, Russian immigrants, settled on the hill off Gager Road (presently Wahconah Drive) in 1913. They had twelve children, the oldest was Jack, then Rebecca, Julius, twin girls (who died young), Pheoble, Louis, Harry, Sarah, Bernard, Minnie and Flora. The Schatz family operated a dairy farm and also accommodated summer guests at "Birds Eye View Farm" as it was called.

In 1917, Jack married Esther Tunick. Their wedding took place "on the farm". They had three children, Efriam, Gertrude and Betty.

In 1940 Jack and Esther Schatz purchased ten acres of land on Route 2 next to the village of Fitchville. Jack was a painting contractor and also built chicken coops and raised chickens. Betty Schatz, his daughter and grand-daughter of Samuel and Rose Schatz married Martin Rogan of New York. Their wedding took place in Bozrah in 1952. They built a home on a portion of the ten acres where they presently reside. They have four children. Dennis married Susan Caroloinas and has a daughter, Elena. They reside in Bozrah. Cynthia Rogan lives in Atlanta, Georgia. Mark and Jack Rogan live in Bozrah.



FORMER RED BRIDGE ON HAUGHTON ROAD

THOMPSON FAMILY

Warren Thompson was the son of Franklin and Pheobe Snow Thompson moving here from East Lyme at an early age. Warren worked for Palmer Bros at various jobs and in 1940 became personnel manager of the plant until its closing in 1948.

He married Hattie Leffingwell at the Fitchville Baptist Church. He was sexton of the church for many years. Hattie served as clerk for thirty-three years and was active in the Women's Missionary Fellowship.

They had a daughter Arline who was virtually born in the shadow of the church (three houses, 2nd door up where the company houses were clustered between the mill and Fitchville Pond). Arline worked in the mill office, played the church organ, served as clerk after her mother, and is currently the treasurer. Arline was also married in the Fitchville Baptist Church to Albert Tolson who was born in Jamestown, New York, but moved here when he was very young and worked in Palmer Bros. while still in grammar school as a machine repairman. Later he became foreman of the "Fancy Room" working till its closing.

Albert was also involved in the church tending the furnace, singing in the choir, serving as deacon and playing his trumpet occasionally. He is the one who electrified the two chandeliers that originally held six kerosene lamps each. The gold cross centered behind the pulpit is inscribed in his memory.

These four people (two generations) served unselfishly and faithfully for years.

Albert and Arline had one daughter Carol who married Raymond C. Barber in the Baptist Church. Carol has been involved in various organizations and collects items of town history. Raymond served as fire chief for twelve years and is presently the First Selectman.

They had four children who are the great-grandchildren of Warren and Hattie. They are Douglas, Scott, Deborah and Glenn.



***Congratulations
Bozrah***

*on your 200th Birthday
and thanks for
being a wonderful hometown
the only one this family has ever known.*

**Ray and Carol Barber
Douglas Scott Deborah Glenn**

**Szloma & Julia
Gejdenson**

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Happy 200th Birthday Hometown!

Thank You

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BOZRAH

Sam Karen
Mia Ari
Gejdenson

INDUSTRIES IN COLONIAL TIMES

GRISTMILLS were quite popular and were the first form of manufacturing attempted. Here one could take grain to be ground.

SAWMILLS were usually established at each gristmill site. The two structures seemed to work together while insuring full-time work for the operator. Instead of money, sometimes a percent of the meal or lumber was taken as pay for grinding or sawing.

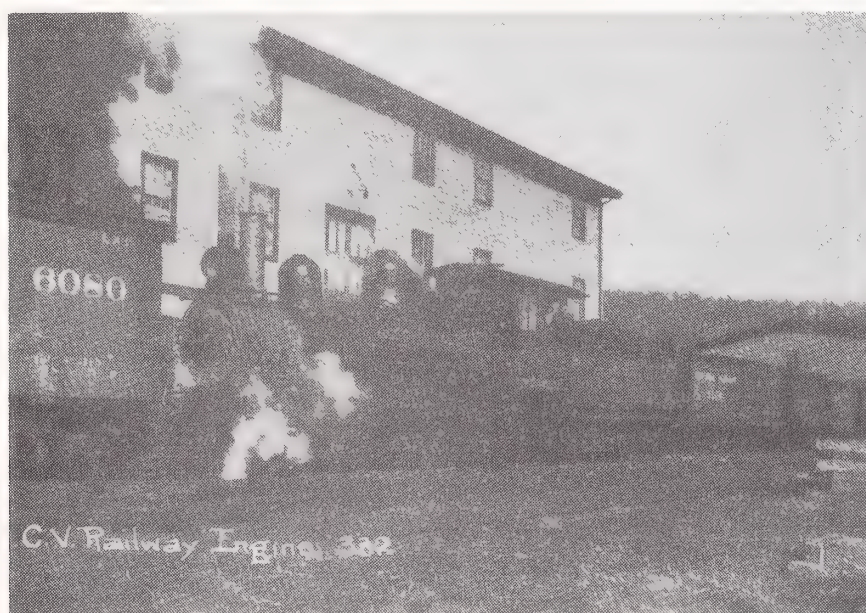
BLACKSMITHS were in great demand for they made all sorts of equipment for the farmer, besides shoeing horses and oxen, making nails, kitchenware, etc.

WAGON SHOPS began with the making of oxcarts with wooden wheels, etc., lumber wagons, carriages and coaches.

TANNERIES were an important part of every community. This is where bids were taken for processing skins into leather. This was a necessary business.

FULLING MILL- In order to satisfactorily clean the dirt and fat from sheeps wool, it was necessary to treat it with fuller's earth. This operation was conducted at the fuller's mill.

In conjunction with the above there were craftsmen like the cooper, who ran a shop making barrels, a cabinetmaker, and a clockmaker, all who played part in the town's early life. The shoemaker usually had a shop near the tannery. Shoes were made very early, and were usually the mocassin type.



ACORN ACRES CAMPGROUND

Acorn Acres Campground, on the north side of Gardners Lake, was formally known as the Clinton Gardner Farm. The house and barn now owned by Pat and Sis Quinn was built in 1835.

According to evidence found by them, the road known as Lake Rd. was a stage coach run to Norwich and New London, delivering and picking up mail and passengers at the Railroad Station. The stage coach drivers stopped at the farm house for coffee. Clinton Gardner operated a dairy farm, selling milk and eggs. Gardners Lake was known to the Indians as "Machipaug" or the Great Pond.

In the early deed, dated 1790, from David Gardner, to Mary Saltonstall, the pond was mentioned. The farm had only three owners; Gardners, Carolines, and the present owners the Quinns, who purchased it in 1960.

The Bozrah Rod and Gun Club originated on this farm; started by Charter members Ralph Banning, Donald Doubleday and Pat Quinn all from Bozrah. The club is still in existence, but has moved to Lebanon.

In 1967 the Quinns opened a family campground. Trying to keep it as original as possible and keeping the beauty of the farm, they have built sites along the existing stone walls and left all the trees for shade. The pastures are hiking trails that run along the Gardner Lake Brook located at the bottom of a hill. There is a two acre pond for swimming and fishing that is fed from Gardners Lake. The Quinns have an olympic size swimming pool, two tennis courts, miniature golf, a recreation hall, office and store for their guests. Acorn Acres has a wooded, quiet, relaxing atmosphere and is family orientated.

Pat and Sis live at the campground during the summer and then move to the Gardner Farm during the winter months.

BOB'S BAIT

In 1973 Bob and Ooly Varney decided to start a business of their own because of the love of fishing and lack of bait shops in the area.

At first worms and minnows were sold out of the basement of their home. In 1975 the front porch section of the house was enclosed and a large minnow tank was bought along with the stocking of fishing tackle.

The Varney's enjoy helping the customers and also helping the beginners select the type of bait and tackle they need. Bob's is open twelve months a year. Business slows down from September to about January, but, once the ponds start freezing the ice fisherman are out in full force and business picks up.

BOZRAH LIGHT & POWER CO.

In the early 1920's, the City of Norwich decided to build a reservoir at Deep River in Lebanon, which was located on a tributary to the Yantic River and was part of the watershed for the Gilman Brothers Company mill. Because of this diversion it soon became apparent that there would not be enough water to run the mill as it had in the past.

While electricity as a power source was available in Norwich, some six miles away in Yantic, the municipal plant could not be extended beyond the incorporated limits of the Town of Norwich. Nathan Gilman was also rebuffed by the Eastern Connecticut Power Company, which informed him that it would be years, if ever, that electric lines could be extended to such a remote and primitive part of the state.

There was only one solution: buy power from the city, and build the six mile electric line along Route 2 from a point on the Norwich-Bozrah town line in Yantic to Bozrahville. However, much to Nathan Gilman's dismay, he found out from the state Public Utilities Commission (PUC) that a charter was necessary, and that if the legislature were to grant one, he was obliged to service all the farmers along the way. Electricity had to be made available to all who wanted it in the franchise territory.

As a Republican in a Republican-controlled state government, and with the help of several of his neighbors, John "Starr" Sullivan and especially Elisha Waterman, a state senator for the district, Nathan Gilman was able to get a bill through the legislature and signed by the governor, E. J. Larke. A Charter had been granted to the Bozrah Electric Company to sell electricity in Bozrah and Lebanon. The year was 1921 and the Bozrah Light and Power Co. was born.

Between 1921 and 1926, Nathan Gilman had considerable difficulty raising sufficient capital from friends and neighbors to string the first wire. Finally, in desperation, he decided to go it alone. (A footnote: one share of stock was never called in and is today owned by a toy merchant in Norwich, who had it handed down to him by his father.)

The pole line along Route 82 in the Leffingwell section of Bozrah had no telegraph, just telephone on several crossarms. It was easier to convert this line, and as a result, the work commenced there.

In 1926, the first customer to receive electricity from Bozrah Electric was a farmer in Leffingwell, not the Gilman Brothers Company in Bozrahville.

Power was purchased from the City of Norwich Gas and Electric Department at 4,800 volts DELTA through two separate locations--one in Yantic on Route 2 and the other in Leffingwell on Route 82.

There was little money to buy crossarms, insulators, hardware, wire and transformers. When it was available, Bozrah Electric would arrange to pick up used hardware at the Gas and Electric Shop on Golden Street in Norwich.

At various times we were also able to borrow the transformers we needed, usually 1 1/2 or 3 KVA. The last borrowed transformer on our lines was discovered and returned to the city not too many years ago. Bozrah Electric also borrowed linemen, who worked (moonlighted) for us on off-duty hours. At first, all of the construction consisted of overbuild on existing telephone lines. These were almost always chestnut poles, purchased from local farmers at \$5.00 each.

From the very beginning, Bozrah Light and Power was nurtured by the Gilman Brothers Company. Every summer at pole setting time they supplied the extra manpower at no charge. Bozrah Light and Power shared the Gilman Brothers office, secretary, and bookkeeper. Our Girl Friday, Sadie Fish, retired in 1973. Yet, she still comes in periodically to conduct in-house audits.

From almost any point of perception, the Gilman Brothers Company has subsidized the Company's growth. Maturity and customer growth to almost 1,900 subscribers, and a customer density approaching 20 per mile, combined with financial stability, has resulted in complete separation of these Siamese twins. Presently, there is no connection between the companies except as supplier and customer.

The company experienced rather erratic growth until 1938, when 90% of its distribution plant was flattened by the historic hurricane. Outside help, most of it crews from Ohio, helped restore the system, which, at the time, served over 200 customers. It would be many years before the Company would recover from this natural disaster.

A ten year contract with the City of Norwich, negotiated in 1962, enabled the Company to receive an ample supply of power at reasonable rates. The rates included a purchased power adjustment clause, but the adjustments were usually down. From 1.37 cents/KWH in 1962 to 1.02 cents/KWH in 1969, the bulk cost for power continued down. By 1972 this figure was still only 1.19 cents/KWH.

This contract with the City of Norwich Department of Public Utilities was about to expire. Equally menacing was the political instability which confirmed our belief that a new reasonable contract was not negotiable. We asked the city to allow us to join them as partners in construction of this new Bean Hill Substation, but our request was refused. There was no alternative but to change suppliers, and turn to Connecticut Light and Power, whose 115 KV lines ran through Bozrah. Their engineering analysis only confirmed what we had already been

told: we couldn't afford the half million dollar price tag and the technology was beyond the reach of our people.

We built the 10 MVA Stockhouse Road substation with our own people, had it operating in four months, and for this remarkable achievement the Company was cited in Electrical World magazine.

One of the pictures in our new office building shows Nathan Gilman standing in front of the new Stockhouse Road Substation, flanked by his two sons--one president, the other vice-president of the Company. A proud moment forever captured on film. At the time of his death in 1978 at the age of ninety-nine, Nathan Gilman was treasurer and still active in Company affairs.

Today, Bozrah Light and Power employs only 12 fulltime and parttime people. Therefore, each person must be responsible for a multitude of tasks.

We were proud of the fact that our "waterwheel", as we called it, grew up with the Company. It supplied the power to run the Gilman Brothers plant, and later supplied Bozrah Light and Power with electricity from a new turbine and generator added in 1942.

We know what business we're in. We know where we've been. We know where we're going, and we know how to get there. We've been thoroughly tested along the way, and we're better for it. We may have been blown off course for short periods of time, but we've always returned to keep our eye on our objective--service.



LAWRENCE GILMAN - NATHAN GILMAN - CHARLES GILMAN

BOZRAH HOME & HARDWARE, INC.

About six years ago John Noblet saw the need for a small engine shop at the Leffingwell section of the town. With previous experience as service manager of a small engine repair shop he decided to embark on this adventure.

Two years later the need to expand was discussed with his family and it was decided to go all out and open a Home and Hardware Store with a power equipment department.

The first step was to find a National buying group so that merchandise could be sold at a fair price. After much consideration ServiStar-American Hardware was chosen. This national chain just celebrated their 75th year.

By the end of 1983 after many hectic months, land, structural engineers, a bank to work with, and permits were received. Work was started.

In February, 1984 merchandise started arriving. After many sleepless nights by family and friends the stocking of shelves and bins was accomplished.

After much adue the opening was on March 13, 1984 with the "Grand Opening" in April. Growth has been constant ever since.

Our pledge is to help and serve all customers with their needs from a screw to a tractor.

With the help of all our friends and customers it has become a success.

CONNECTICUT PUBLIC TELEVISION

Connecticut Public Television broadcasts one hundred ten hours a week over a five station network. One of the transmitting stations and tower is located on Bishop Rd. in Bozrah.

This Channel 53 (Norwich) was activated in 1967.

DREXCO

Dennis Rogan started his excavating company in 1977 with a single "antique" 1957 dozer. Located on Old Route 2 with his wife Susan, and daughter, Elena, the Dennis Rogan Excavating Company (DREXCO) now offers many varied services, consisting of dozer, backhoe, hauling and complete septic and shallow well installation.

FITCHVILLE AUTO CENTER
(BROWN'S ESSO SERVICENTER)

Bill Pierson established a Pontiac franchise and service station on Main Street in Fitchville. It was then taken over by Carl Fleming, John Orr and Fred Speerli.

In June of 1949, ownership of the station was transferred to Robert F. Brown of Norwich. The station was then known as Brown's Esso Servicenter and provided gas, maintenance, repair and wrecker services. In addition, the "regulars" may remember it as the center for Sunday morning chats or the source of numerous give-aways such as placemats, ashtrays, spiceracks, coffee services and other trinkets - all adorned with the Esso tiger. One of the town landmarks was the large lighted clock in the front window. Many young couples depended upon that timepiece to judge how much longer they could stay out. Dave Mathewson has the distinction of being the station's first and last customer and Bob still has that original dollar bill. Gas prices those days ranged from the mid-teens to the mid-thirties in cents per gallon and a dollar bill would often fill your tank.

The Esso station was one of the town's leading employers of high school seniors and many young men began their working careers there as pump attendants. Wages then ranged from \$1.00 to \$2.00 per hour. Many familiar names, including the current First Selectman, can be found in this chronologic listing of employees. (A * denotes a Bozrah resident)

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Jesse Smith | *13. William Mair |
| 2. Edward S. Beebe | *14. Robert Viadella |
| *3. George Turnier | *15. Robert Varney |
| 4. James Kiess | *16. Rosaire Brochu, Jr. |
| *5. Richard Chapman | *17. Thomas Barry |
| *6. Ralph Banning | 18. Robert F. Brown |
| *7. Raymond C. Barber | 19. Russell M. Hyde |
| 8. Arthur Johnson | *20. S. Joseph Leschinsky |
| *9. George K. Brush, III | *21. Carl Heinrich |
| *10. James Banning | *22. William F. Brown |
| *11. John Shea | *23. Edward Barrows |
| *12. Arthur Abell | 24. Robert Koller |

In 1973 the Brown's decided not to renew their lease and the station closed down.

It remained empty for a period of time, then was acquired by its current owner, Roger McGeowan. The station is now known as the Fitchville Auto Center, and is once again a gathering place for hot coffee, good talks and friends.

F & E CERAMICS

Mrs. Evelyn Keroack owner and operator is a certified Duncan teacher and follows their Seminar Programs.

The first class started on January 21, 1971, with six students; two relatives, one neighbor and three friends. By the end of the first year there were ten students. Class was once a week on Saturdays. Another class was started on Wednesdays.

In 1974 Mrs. Keroack quit her regular job and added another class on Tuesday. Within a year a class was started on Thursday plus Monday mornings. There is an average of sixty students per week.

FITCHVILLE HOME, INC.

In 1947, William and Myrtle Rivers opened a convalescent home in the center of Fitchville. This home was known as the Rivers Convalescent Home, and it was operated until 1964.

In 1964, the "Home", was purchased by Lois Natzel and continued to be run as a convalescent home. In 1971 a twelve room addition was built to the home and its status was changed to a "Home for the Aged". This type of home provides care for ambulatory patients, and does not require full time nursing care.

On April 1, 1976, Ralph and Mary Gilman purchased the "Home" and continued to run it as a Home for the Aged, however, the name of the facility was changed to Fitchville Home, Inc.

The twenty-five bed facility is still run by the Gilman family, with Michele Arsenault acting as its Administrator.

Over the years each owner has tried to employ local residents on the staff, and has attempted to integrate the patients into the community. In this regard, there has always been help and cooperation from the local churches, fire department, town officials, merchants and the entire Fitchville community at large.

HOUSE DOKTOR

The Tudisca family moved to Bozrah in 1968 and enjoy living here. They reside on Scott Hill Rd. and think its a nice town with nice people.

In 1980 the business was started doing remodeling, such as carpentry, plumbing and electrical work. A favorite challenge is remodeling older homes and putting on additions.

KOFKOFF EGG FARMS

Kofkoff Egg Farm was started in 1945 as a broiler growing operation by Sam Kofkoff. In 1955 it was converted to an egg production farm and has continued to operate in this manner.

Kofkoff Egg Farms is the largest egg farm in the state, and ships eggs to all nearby states, Puerto Rico and Hong Kong. It produces approximately 1,500,000 eggs a day in some of the most modern facilities in the world. Kofkoff's high quality brown and white eggs are produced and packaged without being touched by human hands, -- under U.S.D.A. supervision to ensure that all eggs are of the finest quality.

JOHNSON OIL CO.

It all started on Bozrah Street in the early 1930's by delivering ice. In 1938 we started the oil business with one 600 gallon truck. We sold only kerosene till 1946. Then the delivery of both fuel oil and kerosene was started.

Walter Johnson went into the Seabee's from 1942 to 1945. The family carried on the business while he was in the service.

When he came home from the service he carried on the business until 1968 when he retired. His son Carl then took over. In 1970 the business had three oil trucks. The present trucks hold thirty-two hundred gallons.

FITCHVILLE UNIVERSAL STORE

The store was built by Palmer Bros. sometime around 1880. The first remembered operator was Mr. Lincoln; next was Lewis Brand.

In 1930 John F. Fields bought the store from Palmer Bros.

In 1940 Irving Dessner owned it followed by the Bendett's in the 1950's. Mrs. Max Bendett says that the store meant a lot to her, for two of her uncles owned it before them. They were Henry Lewis and Lewis Brand.

The store was a gathering place for the villagers. When one bought an item, a clerk brought it to him; there was no serve yourself system. During the Bendett ownership two teenage high school girls, who have kept in touch were employed. They were Betty Baron, now Mrs. Nick Forader and Theresa Homiski, now Mrs. William Kane.

In 1973 George Johnson bought the store and ran it until his retirement in December, 1984. It is now run by Walter Goula.

The post office at one time occupied one corner of the store. An early post-master John F. Fields was followed by his nephew John L. Fields.

L & B ORGANIC FARM

L & B Organic Farm, an alfalfa sprout grower and distributor, was started in the kitchen of Linda and Bob Bendfeldt of South Rd. in February of 1979. Over the years, as business has increased the operation has moved into it's own "sprout room" and the jars have been replaced with automated sprout growing machines. Two varieties, alfalfa and an alfalfa-radish mixture of sprouts are grown, packaged and distributed to local grocery stores, and restaurants buy them in bulk for their salad bars.

JAMES L. LATHROP DISPOSAL SERVICE

As Bozrah celebrates its 200th anniversary, James L. Lathrop celebrates twenty years of service in this town. When the business started in 1966, it had approximately one hundred fifty customers in town and it was done with an open dump truck.

Jim is happy to say that many of those original customers are still with him and that the old dump truck has been replaced with an automatic garbage packer truck.

Bozrah is a great place for a small family run business to get started. The friendly rural area so impressed Jim and Marg that when it came time to buy a home it was decided that it had to be Bozrah. In 1972 they bought their present home on Gifford Lane where they have raised their family and both business and family have prospered and grown.

There have been many changes throughout the years, but the character of the town has always been friendly. Jim is thankful for the opportunity to live with and serve the townspeople of Bozrah.

MAIN'S COUNTRY STORE, INC.

In February, 1983, Thomas and Carol Main bought Fishbone's, a store that has been in existence since the 1940's. They felt that it was in a good location. The family had a lot of work to make it into the store it is today.

When all the painting and remodeling was done, the hard work came. Who were going to be the suppliers? Where would the donuts come from? What time would the store open, who was to work what shifts? The best was wanted for the customers.

On May 25, 1983 the store was opened for business. It was a family adventure from the start. It has become not only a place to buy food, gas and lottery tickets, but a place to see your friends and catch up on the daily news.

MARTY GILMAN INC.

For five and a half decades, the name Marty Gilman, Inc. of the Gilman section of the Town of Bozrah, has been renowned throughout the football playing world. Gilman means football gear. Coaches and players, on all levels from high schools through colleges and universities and on up to the powerful pro teams, know Marty Gilman, Inc. as the originator and manufacturing specialist of quality football practice equipment.

Visit any football field in any one of the fifty states, the Gilman equipment is on that field!

Martin John Gilman, an outstanding football player for both the Norwich Free Academy and the University of Connecticut, and an All-New England guard, brought back his love and knowledge of the game to the development of safe, realistic practice equipment. Starting in the early thirties with Comeback, a big blocking dummy that picked itself up, patents were issued to Marty Gilman for a long series of football sleds, dummies and shields, and other training equipment. Among his designs, there are fundamentals of blocking and tackling, and the Pneuback, a dummy that picks itself up, which is used for downfield blocking. Others include the Fair Catch, a punting and place-kicking net, and the Runback, an ingenious system of ropes which coaches use to teach proper running techniques.

The Marty Gilman, Inc. plant, established in 1929, is in his native village of Gilman. All the raw materials, ranging from steel to cotton, from canvas and vinyl-coated nylon to glaze threads and machine bobbins, from line loops to rope, from paint to fiber, from rubber products to aluminum pipe, are brought into the plant. From this wide assortment of materials, the various products are machined, assembled and finished in the machine shop, and cut, sewn, and fashioned in the sewing department. From these two departments, the gear is specially packaged and shipped from coast to coast. The plant employs thirty people and covers 20,000 sq. ft.

The office is a virtual museum of early football history. Its walls are lined with photos of the Who's Who of coaching greats. With the pictures are hundreds of letters addressed to Marty from the football famous, proclaiming their enthusiasm and appreciation for his realistic, practical designs, and quality manufacture: they praise the equipment that makes training players safer and more effective.

As a creator, the pioneer of the most extensive line of football practice equipment in the nation, Marty was enormously proud of his sons who came into the business. "I had them over to the plant when they were knee high," he used to say beamingly. Before Marty's death in 1979, and since, his family has been totally involved and enthusiastically committed to carrying on

his impeccable tradition. Photographs of younger coaches, who now know and respect Neil and Geoffrey Gilman, join the older collection of Marty's generation, side by side.

Both Neil and Geoffrey continue Marty's singular philosophy: "We never sell for the sake of selling, We always try to build what the coaches need and want. And we build safe and build to last."

PAPER, UNLIMITED

Paper, Unlimited was created by Eileen and Arnold Kaplan in 1971 to provide a personal service for invitations and party accessories to future brides and grooms, fine personalized stationery and unique selection of gift items which were previously available only in large urban areas. A gift selection service is also available for professional and corporate needs.

Since Paper, Unlimited was founded, it has grown rapidly serving more than 1,000 area brides and has been invited to show its' unusual merchandise for Child and Family of Southeastern Connecticut, Junior League of New Britain County and Junior League of Springfield, Mass. at their prestigious charity fundraisers.

Paper, Unlimited is a member of the Norwich Area Chamber of Commerce.

Paper, Unlimited is located on Schwartz Rd. in Bozrah, Conn, and can be reached by calling 889-5338.

ROXANNE'S HAIR STYLES

After completing the New London Hairdressing Academy program and passing the State Exam, Roxanne Allyn received her hairdressing license.

Many friends and family thought the ideal situation now was to open her own shop. An extra room in the house was remodeled by her husband and in 1983 a dream was realized.

Shampoos, sets, perms, tints and styling are available to women, men and children.

During the summer Roxanne enjoys meeting new people from the local campground who stop in for her services.

ODETAH CAMPGROUND
Owners
SEYMOUR AND LINDA ADELMAN

Odetah (O-de-tah) has been in existence since around 1905 as a camp. Originally it was built with cabins for families escaping the heat of the cities, such as New York and Boston.

From that time until 1974, when it was closed, it switched from a family resort to a children's camp. Only for a short period of time did it lose the Odetah name when it became known as Spruce Lodge - that being a joke since not one spruce existed on the property.

Relative to the community with its many little white schoolhouses scattered throughout, Odetah became the scene for graduations. The social hall with its fireplace and stage was the only building in the community large enough to accomodate the town event. The attached pavilion was added in 1984.

Before the construction of Route 2 from Colchester to Norwich, the body of water known as Fitchville Pond and the Yantic River were all one large lake. Because of its beauty the area around the lake was a tourist paradise and many cabins plus the Berkman Hotel (in the area where Exit 23 Westbound is now located) drew wealthy clientele. For entertainment the Odetah Social hall hosted such notables as Milton Berle as he toured the "Borscht Belt" circuit.

On the property are some sights worth hunting up. The first is the heart rock, directly behind Site II. Children camping at Odetah tried to earn merit badges throughout the summer. Those lucky enough, which usually was everyone, earned a heart badge standing for the heart of Odetah.

Another attraction is the large pin oak planted in 1902 by E. Judson Miner, a delegate to the Constitution Convention. One hundred sixty-eight were given out, one to each attendee. In 1941 a count was taken to see how many were still alive.

In 1984 a count was made again. Our tree continues quite healthy behind the dumping station. On the green between First and Second Streets is an original grist mill stone from property on Rt. 163, Bozrah. The course of the water which flowed to the feed mill can still be seen. In 1984 a pure white quartz rock from Sterling, Ct. was added to the collection.

During the renovations of Odetah into a Recreational Vehicle Park, which began in 1978, a tunnel was unearthed behind the store. It is believed that the tunnel may have been part of the "underground railroad" used in the freeing of slaves.

Originally, two homes were located on the property; one in the area of the dumping station belonging to E. Judson Miner, delegate to the 1902 Constitution Convention. The second home,

was located approximately 800 feet behind the tennis courts and belonged to Asa Fitch, one of the early settlers of Fitchville, a village within the town of Bozrah. Today only the foundation remains.

Until the construction of the dam in 1916, necessary for power to the industry at Fitchville Mills, the area where our lake lies was once a meadow for grazing cattle.

At each closing of the camping season, Odetah serenely slips back in time to once again restore itself to the quiet and beauty of nature that gave it its name, "home of the deer".

S & S AUTO MARINE

In 1974 LePeyre's Auto Body was started behind Lake Rd. Package Store on Rt. 82 doing auto body work.

In 1976 a new building was built on Rt. 163 and the sale of used cars was started along with body work.

The sales of boats, motors and trailers was added in 1980 and was then called LePeyre's Marine. Fiberglass boats and outboard motors were repaired.

In 1981 an additional showroom was built for boats.

In 1985 the name changed to S & S Auto and Marine.

SUNSHINE POOLS, INC.

Sunshine Pools, Inc. was founded in 1975 by Jerome Peter McArdle, Sr. The company began as a proprietorship which operated out of Mr. McArdle's home in Bozrah, where he has lived for over twenty-five years.

He built a retail pool supply store which houses a full size inground pool for display, in the frigid winter of 1976 with son's Peter and Matthew. The store is located on the corner of Stockhouse Rd. and Route 87.

Sunshine Pools, Inc. has enjoyed steady growth over it's brief history and this growth necessitated construction of a warehouse in 1983. It is now recognized as the area's largest retail pool company and one of New England's top five.

The backbone of the business is the sales and construction of inground swimming pools. "Jerry" McArdle has over thirty years in the field and he still builds the pools himself. In this way, he builds a unique intimacy with his customers, so rare in business today and this he attributes to Sunshine's success.

Mr. McArdle's wife, Dolores and his daughter Marcia, run the pool store, which is open April through September. The store specializes in pool supplies, spas and patio furniture.

SEYMOUR'S SAND & STONE, INC.

Seymour's Sand & Stone, Inc. was actually started in 1949, by Seymour Adelman, with the purchase of an Oliver OC3 bucket loader/dozer combination. To that was added, in 1950 a F600 Ford truck and a homemade trailer on which to haul the machine around. The site of this new business was Brush Hill where in the backyard of his parents home, at night, Seymour also poured by hand concrete pipe and built a block garage. The very first job he was hired for was the Town of Lebanon.

In 1952, the truck was traded for a Diamond Reo and in that same year there arrived a Hopto backhoe purchased in New York. Rates at that time were \$3.50 per hour for a truck and driver. A new invention was to arrive on the scene, in the form of a hydraulic backhoe, the very first in the New London County area. Power steering and air brakes on his truck made for much easier work.

In 1955, an Allis Chalmers bucket loader on tracks was added. Everything stayed pretty stable until 1958 when a trailer dump and tractor were needed due to a strike on cement in the United States and Seymour hauled bag cement out of Canada. This was not yet the beginning of the concrete phase of Seymour's. By this time Seymour now employed four men. This year was also the installation of the wash plant at the site where Seymour's is located now.

In 1959 a Lorraine crane joined the fleet.

In 1961 a Lima backhoe joins the crowd.

During off hours Seymour built the first truck for the delivery of septic tanks and well tile and sold his molds to the Norwalk-Wilbert Vault Co. which is still handling septic tanks today. Seymour contracted with the vault company to haul the tanks to job sites. By now the company had grown to sizable proportions and Seymour decided to incorporate. A new red ten wheel Ford dump truck became a member of the fleet and a second tank truck was added along with a wife.

1966 began the operation of Seymour's Sand and Stone as we know it today. A concrete plant purchased in Wisconsin was shipped in by rail to the tracks behind the mill on Stockhouse Road. That original plant is located at the present site with many additions since. Along with that are two more plants-one in Norwich, the other in Brooklyn. The company currently employs an average of fifty-three men, and has an equipment list of approximately ten payloaders, four bulldozers, seven trailer dumps with eleven trailers, eighteen mixers, thirty-four miscellaneous trucks and various pieces of small equipment.

SZYMANSKI & SONS ELECTRIC, INC.

In October, 1982, one year before moving to Bozrah, the business was started with one man and one used van. Within two years it grew to two employees and now in 1986 the business has six employees, three vans and a aerial lift truck, plus a new building. They offer full service electrical contracting in commercial, residential and industrial wiring.

Ray and Bonnie Szymanski built a home on Bishop Rd. in 1983. They have four children, Corey, Shawna, Joshua and LaToya.

WINDCREST FARMS RICHARD CLANG

Windcrest Farms was founded by Richard Clang in 1965. Starting with the fourth cage laying house in Connecticut, this building housed 12,000 layers in egg production.

We expanded in 1967 to 24,000 layers and then in 1970, added another building housing 30,000 layers. Shortly after 1970, the building housing 30,000 layers was equipped with an inline grading system.

In 1976, we expanded adding a third building housing 60,000 layers and in 1978 the first building was remodeled with updated equipment and we were able to expand this house of 24,000 to 50,000 in the original building.

In 1979 a dairy farm was purchased on Waterman Road in Lebanon and an automated cage house was built along with an inline grading system to house 82,000 layers.

From our small start in 1965 as egg producers, we have expanded this family operation to its present size where we now operate with a crew of 20 full and part-time employees. Our egg producing operation now consists of four cage houses totaling 222,000 layers.

TED VIADELLA & SON

Ted's backhoe and dozer service started part time in 1976. In 1979 it went to full time and is now including landscaping, welding, septic systems, and snow plowing.

The Viadella's live on Bashon Hill Rd.

ULASIK SHEET METAL, INC.

In 1960 Fred Ulasik started a small sheet metal and roofing shop in the basement of his home. As the business expanded to include heating systems and a larger clientele, a shop was built in back of his home. In two years a growing business necessitated an addition to that building and it then became a three man operation.

In 1977 Fred and his wife turned the business over to their daughter and son-in-law, Martha and Kent Ingves. It then became Ulasik Sheet Metal, Inc.

Continuing to meet present day needs the business is now doing air-conditioning and ventilation in addition to warm-air heating and all types of sheet metal work in large businesses as well as private homes. This now requires a work force of six.

In 1985 a large modern sheet metal shop was constructed on Stockhouse Road.

UNITED PAPER AND METAL CO., INC.

United Paper and Metal Co., Inc. was formed at the turn of the century, with a horse and wagon in Norwich, Ct. The company operated in Norwich, on Asylum St. until 1973. They then moved to Fitchville in 1973-1974, with one truck and three men.

In 1981 with a need for an enlarged facility, a second building was put up.

In 1984 new offices were added to accomodate an increase in the office staff.

The 3rd growth phase is currently underway with the addition of another warehouse and the acquisition of more land.

United Paper and Metal Co., Inc. now employs over twenty people and has over eighteen trucks and trailers in operation on the East Coast.



OTHER BUSINESSES

E.K. STUDIO

ARTHUR GOULART & SON EXCAVATING
AUTO TRANSPORTING SERVICE
BLUE SLOPE FARM
BOB'S TV REPAIR
COMFORT CONTROL
CONNECTICUT AIR FREIGHT
CONNECTICUT SEVEN UP BOTTLING CO.
CONTEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION CORP.
DALE JEWETT, BLDG. CONTRACTOR
GOOSE'S GANDER
LAKE RD. PKG. STORE
MANUEL MISARSKI, BLDG. CONTRACTOR
MARTIN BOTNICK, CPA
MILLER PKG. STORE
MIMMO'S GARAGE
NORMAND DRISCOLL, BLDG. CONTRACTOR
NORWICH ANIMAL HOSPITAL
SALEM KENNELS
SPEERLI PAVING AND LANDSCAPING
STEVEN COIT, EXCAVATING
TRACTOR PARTS, UNLIMITED
UNITED PARCEL SERVICE
UNIVERSITY SOFTWARE

PATRONS

CHILDREN & GRANDCHILDREN OF BILL & THERESA KANE
MILTON & ELIZABETH ARIEWITZ & FAMILY
ROGER, PRISCILLA, LARRY & LYNNETTE HODGKINS
PEG, JIM, GREG, CHRIS, & KATHY LEBEAU
LLOYD, NELLIE & MAURICE ABEL, IN MEMORY OF LLOYD II
WARREN, NORA, TODD, JEN, & WARREN JR. STRONG
PHIL, GALE, PHILIP & JEFFREY WHALEY
STEVE & HELEN JURCZYK & FAMILY
ASA & KRESENIA LOMBARD & FAMILY
CHARLOTTE, MOLLY & DONNY, MARY & BILLY LATHROP
VINCENT, & GWEN PALAZZOLO & FAMILY
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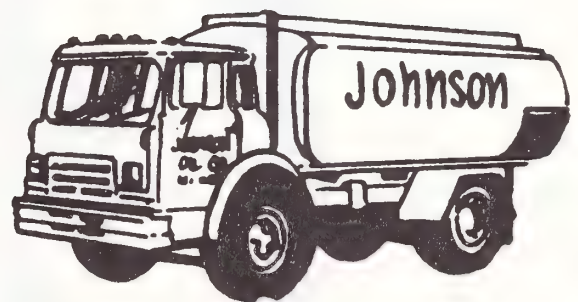
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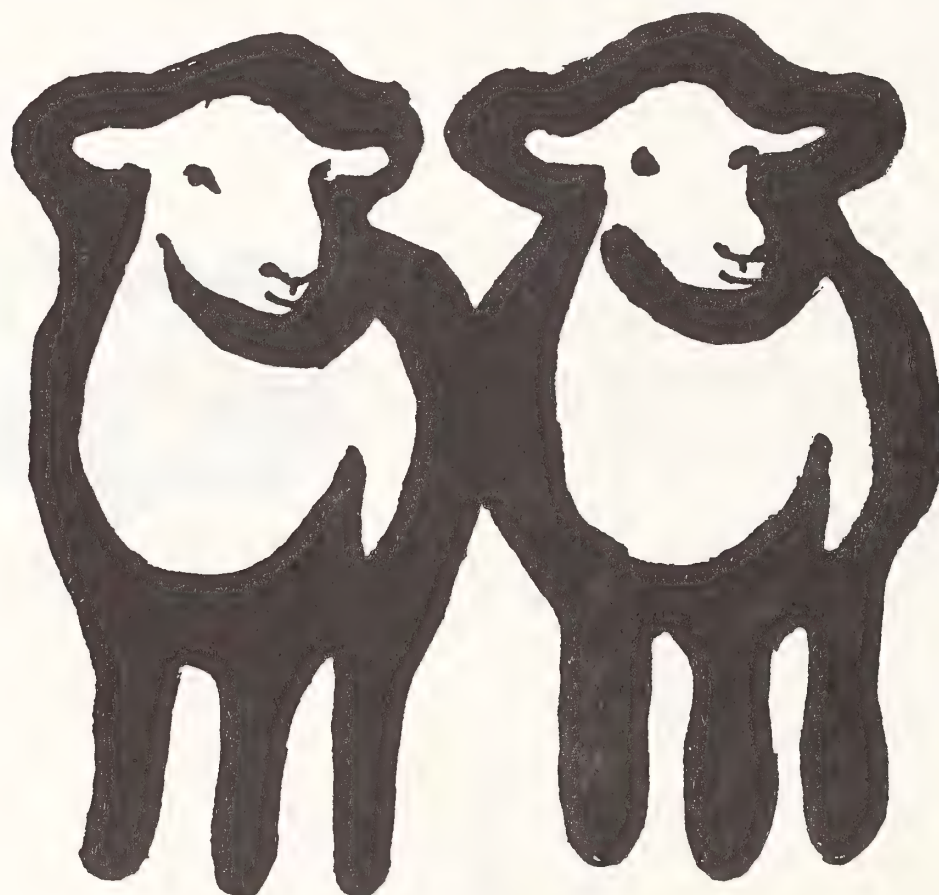
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wed.-thurs.-fri.

7:30 - 10:30 Pm.

Sat. - 9-00 - 11-30 am.

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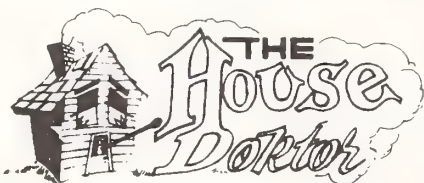
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Happy Birthday
BOZRAH

From The People At

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For All Your Printing Needs

SCHEDULE OF BICENTENNIAL EVENTS

- MAY 4 (Sun.) - 2ND CONNECTICUT REGIMENT
Place: Fields Memorial School Grounds
Time: 9 a.m. to Sunset
Admission: Free
- MAY 4 (Sun.) - COLONIAL CRAFT EXHIBIT
Place: Fields Memorial School
Time: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Admission: Free
- MAY 4 (Sun.) - BOZRAH HISTORY DISPLAY
Place: Fields Memorial School
Time: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Admission: Free
- MAY 8 (THURS.) - SCHOOL PLAY
Place: Fields Memorial School
Time: 2:00 p.m.
- MAY 11 (Sun.) - BURIAL OF A TIME CAPSULE
Place: Fields Memorial School Grounds
Time: 1:00 p.m.
- MAY 11 (Sun.) - TREE DEDICATION
Place: Fields Memorial School Grounds
Time: 1:30 p.m.
- MAY 11 (SUN.) - BIRTHDAY CAKE AND BALLOONS
Place: Fields Memorial School
Time 2:00 p.m.
- MAY 17 (SAT.) - UNITED STATES COAST GUARD BAND
Place: Fields Memorial School
Time 8:00 p.m.
Admission: Free
- MAY 26 (MON.) - MEMORIAL DAY PARADE
Place: Bozrah
Time: 10 a.m.

MAY 31 (SAT.) - BICENTENNIAL BALL
Place: Bozrah Moose Hall
Time 7 p.m. to 1 a.m. Buffet: 7:30 p.m.
Admission: Advance Sale Tickets

JUNE 1 (SUN.) - BICENTENNIAL BREAKFAST
Place: Bozrah Moose Hall
Time: 7 a.m. - 11 a.m.

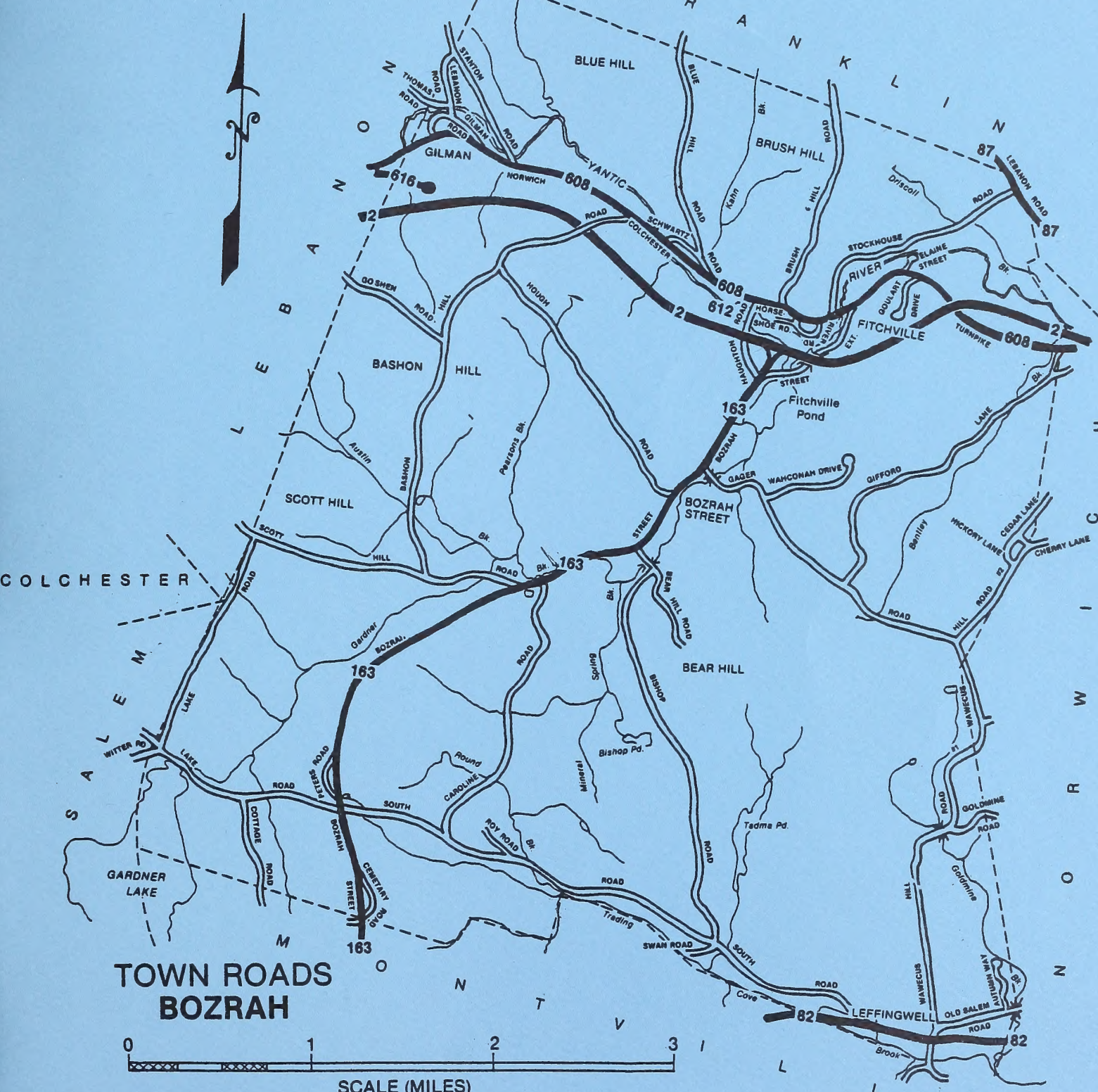
JUNE 7 (SAT.) - PROGRESSIVE CHURCH SUPPER
Place: St. John's Church (appetizer)
Fitchville Baptist (salad)
Congregational Church (main dish)
Leffingwell Baptist (dessert)
Admission: Advance Sale Tickets

JUNE 22 (SUN.) - FAMILY PICNIC DAY
Place: Bozrah Recreation Field
Time : 12 noon to 9 p.m.

RECREATION COMMISSION: SPONSORING TOWN BEAUTIFICATION (PLANTING)



Notes



**TOWN ROADS
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